a-1-1-48

THE Godly Mans Ark

OR,

City of Refuge in the day of his DISTRESSE,

Discovered in divers SERMONS.

The first of which was Preached at the Funeral of Mistress *Elizabeth Moor.*

The other four were afterwards preached, and are all of them now made publick, for the supportation and consolation of the Saints of God in the hour of tribulation.

Hereunto are annexed Mris. Moores *Evidences for Heaven, composed and collected by her in the time of her health, for her comfort in the time of sicknesse.*

By ED. CALAMY, B.D. *and Pastor of the Church at* Aldermanbury.

The Third Edition corrected and amended.

London, Printed for *John Hancock* (*Brother to the late deceased* Eliz. Moore) to be sold at the first shop in *Popeshead Alley*, next to *Cornhill*.

And for *Thomas Parkhurst* at the three Crowns over against the great Conduit at the lower of *Cheapside*, 1661.

TO

Thoſe of *Aldermanbury*-Pariſh, Together,

With all others who attend conſtantly upon the Word of God there preached, and more eſpecially to ſuch of them, who are admitted to partake of the Lords Supper there adminiſtred.

Beloved in the Lord;

I *Need not ſpend much time in giving you an account how theſe* enſuing Sermons *come to be made publick. It is not* becauſe they *are more worthy than thoſe which you hear weekly*; *Nay,*

I may truly ſay (without boaſting) they are leſs worthy *(though I think none of them much worth) than many others. It is not becauſe I deſire to be in print; But it is*

1 *To* preſent *you with the* Pattern *of a* Woman *whom God did pick out to make an example of great affliction, and great patience, that when you come into* great troubles, *you may be* comforted *with thoſe* comforts, *with which* ſhe was comforted.

2 *To* acquaint *you with the* pains *ſhe took, and with* her diligence *in time of health to make* her ſalvation ſure; *That ſo you may be provoked to lay up* ſuitable, ſeaſonable, *and* ſufficient proviſion *againſt an evil day, and not have your* Evidences for Heaven *to get in the hour of adverſity.*

It is the grand ſin of moſt people to delay *and* prorogue *their* ſolemn preparation for affliction *and* ſickneſſe, *till they come to be* ſick, *and in* affliction. *There are many in Hell, who purpoſed to repent, but were prevented by death; therefore* Bernard *ſaith,* Good purpoſes go to Hell, and only good performances lead into Heaven.

Bona propoſita gehennam intrant, bona opera cœlum.

To prevent your delaying *and* deferring *to provide for affliction, theſe Sermons are printed, and to perſwade you, that whatſoever* you do for Heaven, you would do it ſpeedily, and with all your ſtrength.

The Subjects *handled are ſo plain and eaſie, and the* ſtile *ſo* rude, *and* unpoliſhed, *that I was reſolved to have buried them in perpetual oblivion, had I not been* conquered *by this* following (*together with the forementioned*) conſidera-

tion, *that they are* calculated only for people under great troubles; *at which times* learned debates *about* Diſcipline, *and* controverted points of Divinity, painted Eloquence, *and* curious Language, *are of very little eſteem, and account.* Afflicted conſciences *are oftentimes* puzled, *but never* comforted *with doubtful diſputations.* Neat and elegant expreſſions *may skin over, but cannot* cure *ſpiritual diſeaſes. Nothing can heal a* wounded conſcience, *and keep a man from ſinking into deſpondency in the day of great tribulation, but a* real, right, and particular Application of the Promiſes; *to help a* doubting Chriſtian *to perform this great work, there are thirteen plain* Rules and Directions *laid down in the following Treatiſe. My prayer is, that they may prove uſeful and ſucceſſefull.*

Seneca

Seneca *indeed comforts his friend* Polybius, *and perſwades him to bear his afflictions patiently, becauſe he was the* Emperours Favourite, *and tells him*, That it was not lawful for him to complain, while *Cæſar* was his friend: *But this was but a* poor Cordial: *For* Cæſar *himſelf a little while after, was ſo miſerable, that he had not a friend to help him, much leſs was he able to help his friend. The* Word of God *affords a* better Cordial, *it bids a true Child of God not to be overmuch dejected under the greateſt affliction, becauſe he is Gods Favourite; It tells him*, That it is not lawful for him to complain while God is his friend, and the Promiſes of God his rich portion, and inheritance. *Though* Job *loſt all he had, yet he* loſt nothing, *becauſe he loſt not his* God, *who is*

Fas tibi non eſt de fortuna conqueri ſalvo Cæſare.

Fas tibi non eſt de fortuna conqueri ſalvo Deo, & ſalvis promiſſionibus Dei.

All

All in All, *and they who have him, have All.*

My purpoſe at firſt was only to have printed the Sermon preached at Mris. Moores *Funeral, together with her Evidences for Heaven, collected by her in the time of her health. But the importunity of friends hath overſwayed me, and cauſed me to adde four more, preached immediately afterwards on the ſame Text.*

And now (Dearly Beloved) *having this fair opportunity to ſpeak to you in writing, give me leave to propound and lay before you ſome* cautions and admonitions; *ſome* Rules and Directions *for the right ordering of your lives and converſations in theſe dangerous and divided times, that ſo you may be able after my deceaſe, to have them in perpetual remembrance.*

1 *Take heed of* miſtaking *in the* great work *of* Beleeving *and* Repenting. Faith *and* Repentance *are the two great* Goſpel-graces: *And the reaſon why ſo many miſcarry to all eternity, is not for* want *of them (ſuch as they are) but upon a* pure miſtake, *in thinking they have them, when they have but a ſhadow of them. Where one goeth to Hell by* deſparation, *hundreds go thither by* preſumption. O! quam multi cum hac vana fide, & vana ſpe ad æternos labores deſcendunt; How many thouſands go to hell with a vain faith, and hope of heaven! *And therefore be much in examination, whether your Faith be right or no.* Examine your ſelves, whether ye be in the Faith, prove your own ſelves. 2 Cor. 13. 5. *To be miſtaken in the great work of Beleeving, is to be* neceſſitated to damnation. *For* he that beleeves not, ſhall be damned. Mark 16. 16.

ned. *Aſk your ſouls often, whether your* Repentance *be of a right ſtamp or no; whether it be a* Repentance unto life, a Repentance never to be repented of. *To be miſtaken in* purchaſing of Lands, *can but* hurt your outward eſtates; *but to be miſtaken in the* graces of Faith and Repentance, will undoe your ſouls to all eternity, *What the Characters of a true Faith, and true Repentance are, you have frequently heard, I will not now repeat them. Only remember that* ſelf-flattery, *is* ſelf-mockery; *that* ſoul-deluſion, *is* ſoul-damnation, *pray unto God to deliver you from that* great murderer of ſouls, *the ſin of* Preſumption.

2 *Take heed (as I have ſaid) of* delaying, and putting off the great work of providing for Heaven, till ſickneſs or old age. *The Lord Chriſt commands you* to ſeek firſt the King-

Kingdome of God, and his Righteouſneſſe, *&c. Firſt*, before other things, *firſt*, more than other things. *You muſt ſeek after Heaven in the* firſt and chief place, *and if you ſeek it in the* leaſt *and* laſt place, *you will never obtain it. In matters of* weight delay is dangerous, Abigail *made haſte to prevent* Davids *fury*. Rahab *made haſte to hang out her Scarlet thread.* The ſalvation of your ſouls is a matter of the greateſt concernment, and to delay providing for it, is not only a ſin againſt the command of Chriſt, but a ſleighting of the Heaven of Chriſt. *How juſtly may God deny to you (who refuſe when he calls) either* ſpace, *or* grace, *to turn to him, and ſay to you, as it is reported, he ſaid to a man, who deſired to repent in his old age*, ubi conſumpſiſti farinam, ibi conſume furfurem; *Where you*

have

have spent your flower, there go spend your branne; Therefore let my Counsell be acceptable to you. Make Christ *your* unum necessarium, *your one thing necessary,* and Heaven *your* primum quærite; Seek ye first the Kingdome of God and his Righteousnes. *Say with* David, I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandements.

Psal. 119. 60.

3 *Take heed of* resting in the Ministry of man, *You must not* despise *the teachings of Orthodox Ministers lawfully called* (*for he that* despiseth them, despiseth Christ; *he that is above their* teachings, *is above the* teachings of Christ, *for Christ teacheth by them; They are his* Embassadors, *and they preach not only* in his Name, *but* in his stead) *yet you must not rest satisfied with the* teachings of men, *but pray, That while the* Minister *speaks*

Eph. 3. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 20.

ſpeaks to your ears, *God* would ſpeak to your hearts. *That God would fulfil that bleſſed Promiſe,* Iſa. 54. 13. And all thy Children ſhall be taught of God. *That he would give you* an unction from the Holy One to teach you all things. 1 John 2. 20. *That you may ſee the* goings of God in his Sanctuary, you may behold the beauty of the Lord, *and ſee his* power and glory *in his holy Temple.* Pſal. 27. 4. Pſal. 63. 2. *In a word, That God would give you, not only the* preſence of Ordinances, *but* his preſence in them. *That you may experimentally know, what it is to injoy communion with God in Goſpel-Adminiſtrations.*

4 *Take heed of* formality, cuſtomarineſs, *and* careleſneſs *in the* performance of holy duties. *He that ſerves* God careleſly, *brings a* curſe *upon himſelf, inſtead of a* bleſſing. *For* curſed is he that doth

doth the work of the Lord negligently. *He that* ſerves God formally and cuſtomarily doth not ſerve him, but mock him. *If the* Iſraelites *had brought the skin of a beaſt for ſacrifice, inſtead of a beaſt, it would have been counted a* mocking of God, *rather than a* worſhiping of him. *So do they who ſerve* God negligently and formally.

5 *Be not contented to have a* name to be godly and religious, but labour to be really ſuch as you are ſuppoſed by others to be. *Remember what Chriſt ſaith of the* Rev. 3. 2. *Church of* Sardis. That ſhe had a name to live, but was dead. *What will it profit you to be thought by men to be godly, if God knows that you are ungodly? What will it advantage you to ſeem to go to Heaven, and yet at laſt to miſs of it? O labour to be* Chriſtians, *not only in* word, *but in* deed, *and in* truth,

not

not only by outward profeſſion, *but by a* holy converſation. *Reſt not* ſatisfied with a leſs degree of grace, than that which will bring you to Heaven. *It will be a double Hell,* to go within an inch of Heaven, and yet at laſt to miſcarry.

6 *Remember what Chriſt ſaith of* Capernaum. *The* Capernaites *were not ſo bad as the* Gadarens, *who deſired Chriſt to depart from them: much leſs as the* Nazarites, *who* thruſt Chriſt out of their Coaſts. *For they heard him preach every Sabbath-day, and were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine. And yet becauſe they did not ſincerely practiſe what was taught them, Chriſt pronounceth a heavy doom againſt them,* Matth. 11. 23, 24. And thou *Capernaum* which art exalted unto Heaven, ſhalt be brought down to Hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been

Luke 4.29. Luke 4.32.

done in *Sodom*, it would have remained unto this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tollerable for the land of *Sodom* in the day of judgement, than for thee. *It is not enough to praise the Sermons you hear, to admire, and stand astonished at the Doctrine delivered, if you* do not practise *what is* preached. *If you do not* live Sermons, as well as hear them, *it shall be easier for* Sodom *and* Gomorrha *at the day of judgement than for you.*

7 *Take heed that the* love of the world, *doth not eat out the* heart of Religion, *and at last*, Religion it self out of your hearts. *Remember what the Apostle* Paul *saith*, That the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. *And*

1 Tim. 6. 10.

what

what the Apoſtle John *ſaith*, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 Joh. 2. 15. *There is no ſin ſo contrary to true Saint-ſhip, as worldly-mindedneſs.* A Saint is one who hath much of Heaven in him, and is much in Heaven. John 3. 3. ἄνωθεν. *A Saint is one whoſe* original is from Heaven, *he is* born from above, *his* name is written in Heaven, *his* meditations, affections, *and* converſation *is in Heaven. He is one who is* elected to things above, *and called to* partake of Heaven and eternal happineſs. *And for ſuch a man to mind things earthly, is a ſin of the firſt magnitude. Therefore the Apoſtle would not have* covetouſneſs ſo much as named amongſt Chriſtians. Eph. 5. 3. *There is no ſin more* defiles the ſoul. *It will* beſmear you, *and make you* ſpirituall Blackamores, *and*

Chimney-ſweepers in *Gods ſight. There is no ſin doth more* dead and
Mat.22.5. dull the heart in the doing of good duties. *It hinders a man both from, and in Ordinances. The* Farmer *and* Merchant *made* light of the call of Chriſt, and one went to his Farm, the other to his Merchandize. *There is no ſin will more* eclipſe the light of Gods countenance from ſhining upon you. *The* Moon *is never in the* Eclipſe, *but when the earth comes between us and the Sun. A child of God is ſeldome without the light of Gods countenance, unleſs it be through the over-much love of the world. No ſin will more* hinder your flight up to Heaven. *The*
Gen.33.13, 14. Oſtrich *cannot flye high, becauſe of the ſhortneſſe of her wings.* Jacob *was forced in his travelling towards* Canaan *to go* ſlowly *and* ſoftly, *becauſe of his multitude of children, of flocks and herds. And therefore*

let

let me again beseech you to take heed of worldly-mindedness; *this will quickly* betray you into Apostacy from Christ, and from the truths of Christ. *A man who loves the world, will* (Judas-like) betray Christ for thirty peeces. *He will part with his* Religion, *rather than with his* estate. *This sin is* the root of all evil, it exposeth a man to all temptations, *to* hurtful lusts, *to* all errors, *and* all kind of sorrows. *It will* drown your souls in perdition. *He that seeks things* below, *shall have his* Heaven below. *The Apostle saith expresly*, that they who mind earthly things, their end is damnation. *Therefore let me once again repeat it; take heed lest you be like the* Thorny ground. *Let not the cares, riches, and pleasures of the World choak the good seed that is weekly sown in your hearts.*

1 Tim. 6. 9.

Ϛυθίζȣσι.

Phil. 3. 19.

8 *Let it be your* morning and evening thought *what ſhall become of you to all eternity, and labour ſo to* uſe things temporal, *as not to loſe the* things that are eternal. *Remember that this life is a* moment upon which eternity depends, *and according as you ſpend this moment, ſo you ſhall be for ever happy, or for ever miſerable. Remember that the* pleaſures of ſin are but for a moment, but the puniſhments of ſin are everlaſting.

Momentum unde pendet æternitas.

Momentaneum quod delectat, æternum quod cruciat.

9 Look *upon* Sin as the greateſt of evils, *greater than* poverty, impriſonment, baniſhment, *or* death it ſelf; *chuſe the* greateſt Affliction, *rather than* commit the leaſt ſin. *If* Hell *were on the one ſide, and* Sin *on the other, chuſe rather* to go into Hell, *than* to ſin againſt God. *For* Sin is a greater evil *than* Hell, *becauſe it is the cauſe* of Hell, *and* more oppoſite to God (*who is the*

Anſelme.

the chiefeſt good) *than* Hell *is*. *For* God is the Author of Hell (*which he hath provided for all unbeleevers, and impenitent perſons.*) *But it is* blaſphemy in the higheſt degree, to *ſay*, That he is the Author of ſin. Look *upon* Chriſt *as the* greateſt good, *greater than* health, wealth, liberty, *or* life. Love Chriſt *more than you love* your eſtates *or* lives; *He that* loves Chriſt *more than the* world, *will not forſake* Chriſt *to imbrace the world. He that fears* ſin *more than* affliction, *will not ſin to avoid* affliction.

10. *Reſt not contented with that* meaſure of grace you *have attained unto*; *but labour* to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Remember that the Scripture doth not only perſwade you* to get into Chriſt; *but* to grow up into Chriſt; *not only to be* Righteous, *but to be* filled with the

Eph. 4. 15. fruits of Righteouſneſs, &c. *Re-*
Luke 12. 48. *member that ſaying of Chriſt,* To whom much is given, of them much is required. *God hath given you much, you have plentiful means of ſalvation, and you have had them many years, he expects from you, not only* good fruit, *but* much good fruit; *not* onely thirty fold, *and* ſixty fold, *but an* hundred fold. *Where* the Husbandman beſtows moſt coſt, *he expects* moſt fruit. *The* more a Merchant *adventures by Sea,* the greater return he looks for. *God hath done more for you, than for many others, and therefore he expects that you* ſhould do ſome ſingular thing for him. He looks you ſhould be more humble, more heavenly, more knowing *than others. If the* Sun *ſhould give no more light than a* little Candle, *to what purpoſe hath God given it ſo much light? If you that have* Sun-

like

like abilities *do no more good, than those who have but* half your abilities, *to what purpose have you them? It is a true saying*, As our gifts increase, so must our account increase. *You shall answer at the great day, not only for your* gifts, *but for the* measure *of them. Remember that* God *doth not only require service from you, but* service proportionable *to the means, and mercies you enjoy.*

Crescentibus donis crescunt rationes donorum.

He that hath but one Talent, *shall answer but for one; but you that have* five, *or* ten Talents, *must be answerable, according to the quantity, as well as the quality of them.*

11 *Labour to* diffuse those graces which God hath given you, and to communicate them to those with whom you converse. *True grace is of a* spreading nature, *and therefore compared to* leaven, *which diffu-*

diffuseth it self into the whole lump, *and to* Salt, *that seaseneth all those things with which it is mingled.* Joh. 4. 25. 30. *Assoon as the* woman of Samaria *had found out the* Messias, *she leaves her Water-Pot, and goeth into the City,* to tell others what God had done for her. *Assoon as* Cornelius *had received the* Message *from the* Angel, *to send for* Peter; *he calls together his* kinsmen and neer friends, *that they, together with him,* might be made partakers of Gospel-grace. Acts 10. 24. *A true Christian is like a* Needle touched with the Loadstone. *A* Needle (*truly touched*) *draweth another, and that will draw another, and that, another: Whosoever hath his* heart truly touched by effectual grace, will labour to convert others, and they, others. Philip *will draw* Nathaniel, Andrew *will draw* Peter. *And* Peter being converted, will la-

labour to ſtrengthen his Brethren: There is a *natural inſtinct* in all creatures to make others like themſelves (*as* fire *will* turn all things *that come neer it*, into fire) *and there is a* ſpiritual inſtinct *in all* converted Chriſtians, *to* convert others. *It is as* natural *to a* true Chriſtian *to make others* true Chriſtians, *as it is* for a man to beget a man. *True grace is not only of a* communicative, *but of an* aſſimilating nature.

See then that you labour by ſeaſonable *and* religious admonitions, *and* exhortations; *by* communicating of experiences, *and eſpecially by the* ſhining pattern of a holy life and converſation, *to bring all thoſe with whom you converſe unto Jeſus Chriſt*. That man hath not grace in truth, who puts it in a dark Lanthorn.

12 *Labour to be* good in your Rela-

Relations, *good* Husbands, *and good* Wives, *good* Parents, *and good* Children, *good* Maſters, *and good* Servants. *Remember that that man cannot be a* good man, *who is not* good in his Relation. *He cannot be a* good Chriſtian, *who is not a* good Husband, *or a* good Child, *or a* good Father, &c. *She cannot be a* good Chriſtian, *who is not a* good Wife; *and ſo of the reſt, and the reaſon is: Becauſe the* ſame God who commands the Huſband to love God, commands him to love his Wife; the ſame God who commands the Woman to obey God, commands her to obey her Huſband. *There is the ſame ſtamp of Authority upon* our duties *towards our Relations, as upon* our duties *towards God; therefore be ſure to make conſcience of relative duties.*

13 *Joyn* works of mercy and cha-

charity together with your profeſſion of piety and holineſſe. *For God hates a* penurious, niggardly, *and* covetous profeſſor of Religion. *Let that ſaying of* David *abide upon your hearts,* God forbid I ſhould ſerve the Lord with that which coſt me nothing. *God hates your obedience to the* firſt Table, *if it be not joyned with obedience to the* ſecond. *Works of mercy and charity are made in Scripture the touchſtones of the truth of our piety and holineſſe.* This is pure Religion (*ſaith the Apoſtle*) and undefiled before God, and the Father, to viſit the Fatherleſs, and Widows in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the world. If any man ſay (ſaith St. *John*) I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a lyar, for he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom

2 Sam. 24. 24.

Iſa. 1. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

James 1. 27.

1 Joh. 4. 20.

whom he hath not ſeen? An unmerciful, and an uncharitable man, is a wicked and an ungodly man. Let it be the care of all thoſe amongſt you, who are *rich in eſtate*, to be rich in good works. *Let every man* lay up for the poor, according as God hath proſpered him, *remembring that ſaying of* 1 Cor. 16. 2. *Chriſt*. Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdome prepared for you, from the foundation of the world; For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink, I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in, naked, and ye cloathed me, I was ſick, and ye viſited me, I was in priſon, and ye came unto me.

14 *Take heed* of ſeparating *from the* publick Aſſemblies of the Saints. *I have found by experience, that all our* Church-calamities *have* ſprung *from this* root. *He that ſepa-*

rates

rates from the publick worſhip, is like a man tumbling down a hill, and never leaving till he comes to the bottom of it. *I could relate many ſad ſtories of perſons profeſſing godlineſs, who out of diſlike to our Church-meetings, began at firſt to ſeparate from them, and after many changes and alterations, are turned ſome of them* Anabaptiſts, *ſome* Quakers, *ſome* Ranters, *ſome* direct Atheiſts. *But I forbear; you muſt hold* communion *with all theſe* Churches, *with which* Chriſt holds communion; *you muſt ſeparate from the* ſins of Chriſtians, *but not from the* Ordinances of Chriſt. *Take heed of* unchurching *the* Churches of Chriſt, *leſt you prove* Schiſmaticks *inſtead of being* true Chriſtians.

15 *Though you never live to ſee the* times ſetled, *yet labour to get your* conſciences ſetled: *Pray for*

the

the Spirit of Truth, to guide you into all Truth *in these erring dayes. Remember that saying of Christ,*

b Mat. 6. 23. If thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness; if therefore the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness. *God hath given you your* understandings, *to be the guide of the whole man. As the* Eye *is the* guide *of the body, and the* Sun *of the world, so is the* understanding *of the man; therefore you must in praying, pray that* God *would give you* a right understanding in all things. *Pray not* only for the grace of Sanctification, *but of* Illumination. *Avoid as soul-poyson all Doctrines,*

1 *Which* tend to liberty, *open a door to prophaness, and are contrary to* godliness.

2 *Which hold forth a* superstitious strictness *above what is required in the Word.*

3 *Which*

3. *Which are* Antimagiſtratical, *and* Antiminiſterial.

4. *Which lift up* corrupt nature, *and exalt* unſanctified reaſon.

5. *Which preach* free-grace, *to the utter ruine of* good works.

6 *Which leſſen the* priviledges of Infants, *and makes their condition worſe under the* New Teſtament, *than under the* Old.

7 *Which are contrary to the* Analogy of Faith, the ten Commandements, and the Lords Prayer.

16. *Take heed leſt being* led away with the errour of the wicked, you fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſs. *Take heed of a threefold Apoſtacy, of which this Nation is deeply guilty.*

Of Apoſtacy

1 In your Judgements, *from the Truths of Chriſt, and from the Faith once delivered to the Saints.*

2 In your Affections, *from that ancient love, deſire, and delight, which the Saints of God have had heretofore,*

& you your selves once had in, & towards the ordinances of Christ, & the godly & learned Ministers of Christ.

3 In your conversations, *from that humble and exact walking with God in all good duties, both towards God, and man, which was the credit, & honour of the good old Puritan in former dayes. Let me speak to you in the words of the Apostles* Paul *&* Peter. Where-
1 Cor. 15. 58. fore my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast and unmoveable, &c. The God of grace, who hath called you into his eternall glory by Jesus Christ, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you.

17 *Remember that it is the* will of Jesus Christ, *that you who partake of the* same word of life, *& of the* same Sacramental Bread and Wine, should admonish one another, exhort one another, watch over one another, bear the burdens of one another, provoke one another to love & good works; seek the good of one

another,

another, and not your own good only. That you ſhould warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, & ſupport the weak. *That this is your duty appears, from* Col. 3. 16. Phil. 2. 4. Heb. 1. 24. Gal. 6. 1. Rom. 15. 2. Rom. 14. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 15. 1 Theſ. 5. 11, 13, 14. *The* 12. verſ. *ſpeaks* of Miniſterial & authoritative admonition, *but the* 13, & 14. verſes *of* fraternal & charitative. *Theſe Texts will riſe up in Judgement againſt thouſands of Chriſtians at the laſt day.* I do not ſay that you are to admoniſh none but thoſe of your own Society. Admonition is an act of mercy; *It is* ſpiritualis Eleemoſyna, ſpiritual Alms, *& you are bound by the* royal Law of charity, *by the* communion of Saints, *the* communion of Churches, & communion of natures, *to deſtribute theſe ſpiritual alms to all that need them, as* God *ſhall give occaſion.* But this I ſay, *you ought eſpecially to admoniſh them, and watch over them. This is* novum, *though not* ſolum vinculum. *Some Di-*

vines think that one chief reaſon why the Iſraelites *were puniſhed for* Achans ſin, *was becauſe they did not* admoniſh him, *and* watch over him: *For* the Iſraelites *were commanded in the plural number,* Joſh. 6. 18. Keep your ſelves from the accurſed thing, &c. *He was* one of the body, *and becauſe they did not* watch over him, *they* communicated in his ſin, and in his puniſhment. *There is an excellent Law in this Nation,* That every Pariſh ſhall provide for its own poor. *And by* parity of reaſon, *it is* as juſt and equal, That every Congregation ſhould chiefly and eſpecially look *to the* ſouls *of their own* members, to warn them, admoniſh them, exhort them, *and* watch over them.

That you may the better diſcharge this duty, you muſt labour to be acquainted one with another, *as far as* your Callings *and* Relations *will give you leave. It is a* great and common ſin, *and much to be lamented,* That there

there is ſo little knowledge and acquaintance, *between thoſe that are of the ſame* Congregation. *They* ſit in the ſame Pew together, partake of the ſame Sacrament, *and yet* converſe no more together, *than if one lived at* York, *and the other at* London. *And when they* do converſe together, *it is* a meer civil and outward converſe, as amongſt ſober heathens: *But there is very little* Religious ſociety *between them, for the* ſpiritual edification one of another. *Now this muſt needs be a great ſin; For how can you watch over one another, edifie and admoniſh one another? How can you ſupport the weak, comfort the feeble-minded, if not ſpiritually acquainted one with another.*

And yet it is not my opinion, *that every member of a* Congregation *is bound to know every* fellow-member. *I beleeve it was not ſo in the* Church of Jeruſalem, *or of* Samaria. *It is* incredible, *to think that they all knew one ano-*

ther. I ſhould be loath to lay ſuch a clog upon your conſciences, *as to ſay,* That every maid-ſervant, and man-ſervant is bound to know, and to be acquainted with all thoſe with whom they communicate in the Lords Supper. *Indeed the* Church-officers *are the* eyes *of the people, and are to know all, and to be acquainted with all: But yet notwithſtanding this, I ſay, It is the duty of every* member, *to endeavour according to his* place & calling, *to grow up in ſpiritual acquaintance one with another, as God ſhall offer occaſion, and not to be ſo ſtrange and unacquainted, but to* walk in love one towards another, to bear one anothers burden, and ſo fulfill the Law of Chriſt, *Gal.*6.2.

And this you ought the rather to do, that ſo you may contribute *to the keeping of the* Sacrament of the Lords Supper pure in the Congregation to which you belong. *There is much complaint amongſt many (and not without juſt cauſe) of* mixt communions, *and of*

universal liberty *which some take in giving the Sacrament promiscuously to all that come, though grosly ignorant, and notoriously scandalous, and in making* (*if I may so speak*) *the* Chancel-door, *as* wide *as the* Church-door. *This in my judgement is a great iniquity.*

1 *It is to* give holy things to Dogs; and to cast Pearls to Swine. *It is a* profanation *of the* Ordinance, *in giving it to those who are* visibly unworthy *to receive it, and to whom we know* Christ *would not have us to give it.*

2 *It is an* act of great uncharitableness, *to those who are grosly ignorant, and scandalous. For it is to give them that which* we know *will further their* damnation.

3 *It makes the* Church-officers (*who have power to hinder them, and do not use it*) partake of other mens sins.

4 *It is an* act of cruelty *to the* Nation: *For because we have been* Prodigal of Christs blood, *therefore he hath been* Prodigal of ours.

5 *It is a great* ſcandal *to the* truly godly, *and* a ſtumbling-block to weak Chriſtians, *cauſing them (though unadviſedly) to ſeparate from our Congregations.*

6 *It is to* walk contrary *to the praxiſe of moſt (if not all) of the* Churches of Chriſt *in the Chriſtian world.*

To prevent this Sacrament-prophanation; *there are ſome* Miniſters, *who wholly ſurceaſe from adminiſtring it. This I allow not, unleſs in caſe of abſolute neceſſity. For this is (as it were) to* ſuſpend the whole Congregation, *and to deny* Children *their* bread, *for fear of* giving it to Dogs. *The beſt way is to follow the advice which our* Lord Jeſus Chriſt *gives*, Math. 18. 15, 16, 17. *where he propounds* Rules *and* Directions *for the removing of ſcandals out of the Church.* If thy Brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee (*ſaith Chriſt*) go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone, *He doth not ſay*, Go, and ſeparate preſently (*For this is to* rend the Church,

Church, *not to* heal it; *This is to* hinder thy Brother from Chriſt, *rather than to* gain him to Chriſt. *He doth not ſay*, Go and tell others (*for this is to* back-bite thy Brother. *This is to* reproach *him*, *rather than to* reprove *him*) *But he ſaith*, Go & tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother: But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, &c. And if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church (*that is*, *to ſuch who are impowred by Chriſt to redreſs offences*) but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him, &c. *Hence learn*,

That all Church-reformation, *and* Sacrament-purity *muſt begin from* Church-members, *and proceed from them in Chriſts* way *unto* Church-officers; That if any man who is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or guilty of any other ſcandalous ſin, *It is your duty*, *who are members of the ſame body with him*;

and

and know his guiltineſs, to labour by private admonition to gain him to God, *not to* ſhame him *by telling others, but to* gain him, *by telling him alone. But if he will not hear you, then you are in* an orderly way, *to bring it to the* Church, *which if you* neglect to do, *the ſin of* Church-pollution *is your* ſin, *and not the* ſin *of your* Church-officers. *If there be* three doors *to get into an houſe, he that keeps me out of the* firſt, *keeps me out of the* other two. *All* Sacrament-reformation *begins with you,* you are the firſt door at which it enters: *if you fail of your duty, the ſin lyeth at your door, not at ours. It is the cuſtome of all people (though otherwiſe godly) if a* ſcandalous ſinner *be admitted to the* Lords Supper, *to charge the ſin of it upon the Miniſter, and in the mean time to forget that the ſin is* theirs, *not* his, *becauſe they have not done what* Chriſt *would have them, for the* gaining of him, *and for the* inabling *of the* Church, *to proceed againſt him by*

by cenſures, *if he prove obſtinate. The* Lord *give you hearts to think of this, and* give you grace (*inſtead of murmuring againſt, and complaining of mixt communions, and of ſeparating from us becauſe of them*) *to* contribute *your utmoſt towards the* purging of our *Congregations, and* to practiſe *all thoſe duties which* Chriſt *requires of you in order thereunto.*

I have much more to ſay of this particular, but I perceive that the Epiſtle ſwells to too great a bigneſs, and therefore I ſhall defer what I have further to ſay, till God ſhall offer me another ſuch opportunity.

18 *Labour to maintain* peace and unity *amongſt your ſelves.* It is a good and pleaſant thing for brethren to dwell together in unity. Have Salt in your ſelves, and peace one with another. *Labour to get your ſouls* ſeaſoned *with the grace of* humility, ſelf-denial, *and* mortification; *and this will keep you in peace; Remember the ſaying of Chriſt,*

Pſal. 133.

Mark 9. 50.

Chriſt, Bleſſed are the Peace-makers. Now I beſeech you Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no diviſions among you, but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the ſame minde, and in the ſame judgement.

19 *Study often and often the* quatuor noviſſima, *the* four laſt things, Death, Judgement, Hell, and Heaven. *The* meditation *of* Death, *will* prepare you for Death: *The* meditation of Heaven, *will* make you heavenly-minded: *The* meditation of Hell, *will* keep you from Hell: *Therefore* Bernard *perſwades us* to go often down to Hell by meditation while we live, and we ſhall not go down to it when we dye. *The meditation of the* day of Judgement, *will be both* frænum, & calcar, *a* bridle *to curb you from ſin, and a* ſpur *to incite you to all godlineſs, that ſo you may give up your account with joy at that terrible day.*

20 *Study*

20. *Study the* exceeding great and precious Promiſes *of the Goſpel, make a* Catalogue *of them,* meditate *on them, and labour to apply them to your own ſouls, for your everlaſting comfort. And for this purpoſe, read over theſe Sermons, and ſtudy them in time of health, that you may injoy the benefit of them in the time of ſickneſs.*

Laſtly, Let me intreat you to praiſe God *in my behalfe; that he hath been pleaſed out of his free love to uphold me amongſt you in my* Miniſterial imployment *for theſe Eighteen years; And to continue your earneſt prayers unto him, that he would make my labours more* uſeful *and* ſucceſſeful, *that he would* guide me, *that I may* guide you, *that he would not only* make, *but* keep *me* faithful *in theſe backſliding times, and teach me* ſo to preach, and ſo to live, that I may ſave my ſelf, and thoſe that hear me.

Your Servant in the Work of the Miniſtry.
Ed. Calamy.

Two very uſeful and profitable Book lately printed for *John Hancock* in *Popeſ-head-Alley*.

The Silent Soul, with ſoveraign Antidotes againſt the moſt miſerable Exigents:

OR,

A Chriſtian with an Olive-leaf in his mouth, when he is under the greateſt afflictions, the ſharpeſt and ſoreſt trials and troubles, the ſaddeſt and darkeſt providences and changes, with Anſwers to divers Queſtions and Objections that are of greateſt importance, all tending to win and work ſouls to be ſtill, quiet, calm, and ſilent under all changes, that have, or that may paſs upon them in this world, &c. Lately printed, and dedicated to all afflicted, diſtreſſed, diſſatisfied, diſquieted, and diſcompoſed Chriſtians thorowout the world.

Helps to underſtand, and improve the Holy Scriptures for our ſpirituall Profit, Comfort, and Stability.

Viz. Scripture { Prophecies. Promiſes. Precepts. Threatnings.

By *Robert Perrot* Miniſter of Gods word.

Books

Books lately Printed for *Thomas Parkhurſt*, at the Sign of the three Crowns over againſt the great Conduit at the lower end of *Cheapſide*.

A Commentary upon the three firſt Chapters of *Geneſis*, by Mr. *John White*, in fol.

The humbled ſinner reſolved what he ſhould do to be ſaved; or faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt the only way of ſalvation, by Mr. *Obadiah Sedgewick*, in 4°.

The Riches of grace diſplayed, in the offer and tender of ſalvation to poor ſinners, by the ſame Author, in 12.

The Fountain opened, and the water of life flowing forth, for the refreſhing of thirſty ſinners, by the ſame Author, in 4.

Anatomy of ſecret ſins, preſumptuous ſins, ſins in dominion and uprightneſſe, on *Pſal.* 19. 12, 13. together with a Treatiſe of the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, by *Obadiah Sedgewick*.

Hidden Manna by Mr. *Fenner*, in 12.

The hypocritical Nation deſcribed, with an Epiſtle prefixed, by Mr. *Samuel Jacomb*, in 4.

A Sermon of the baptizing of Infants, by Mr. *Stephen Marſhal*, in 4.

The unity of the Saints with Chriſt the Head, by the ſame Author, in 4.

The ſingular Actions of ſanctified Chriſtians, in ſeveral Sermons, on the 5. of *Matth.* 47.

An Expoſition on the whole book of the *Canticles*, by *R. R.*

There is printing an Exhortation of the Churches of *Bohemiah*, to the Churches of *England*, wherein is ſet forth the good of unity, order, diſcipline, and obedience, in Churches rightly conſtituted; With an Exhortation premiſed of the order and diſcipline uſed in the Churches of the Brethren of *Bohemiah*: Dedicated to His Moſt Excellent Majeſty, *Charls* the IId. in *Holland*, at His departure for *England*, if poſſibly it may be for an accommodation among the Church of Chriſt; By *J. Amos Comenius*, the only ſurviving Biſhop of the remains of thoſe Churches.

Here followeth the Sermon preached at the Funeral of Mris. *Elizabeth Meore*, the 27. of *February*, at *Aldermanbury*.

THE

A

THE Godly Mans Ark, OR, City of Refuge in the day of his Distresses.

SERMON I.

PSAL. 119. 92.

Unless thy Law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

THis Psalm (out of which my Text is taken) exceeds all the other *Psalms*, not onely in *length*, but in *excellency*, so far (in the judgement of *Ambrose*) as the light of the *Sun* excells

the light of the *Moon*. As the Book of Psalms is stiled by *Luther*, *An Epitome of the Bible*, or a *little Bible*: So may this Psalm fitly be called, *An Epitome of the Book of Psalms*. It was written (as is thought) by *David* in the dayes of his banishment under *Saul*, but so penned, that the words thereof suit the condition of all Saints. It is *pene doctrinæ publicæ omnique aptæ & convenientia distribuens*, *A publick storehouse* of heavenly doctrines, distributing fit, and convenient instructions to all the people of God, and therefore should be in no lesse account with those who are spiritually alive, than is the use of the *Sun*, *Aire*, and *Fire*, with those who are naturally alive: It is divided into two and twenty *Sections*, according to the *Hebrew Alphabet*, and therefore fitly called, *A holy Alphabet for Sions Schollars*. The A. B. C. *of godlinesse*, *Sixtus Senensis* calls it, *An Alphabetical Poem*. The *Jews* are said to teach it their little children the first thing they learn, and therein they take a very right course, both in regard of the heavenly matter, and plain stile fitted for all capacities. The chief scope of it, is to set out the glorious *excellencies* and *perfection of the*

Law of God. There is not a verse (except one only, say some learned men in Print, but are therein deceived, but I may truly say, Except the 122. and the 90. verses) in this long Psalm, wherein there is not mention made of the Law of God, under the name of Law, or Statutes, or Precepts, or Testimonies, or Commandements, or Ordinances, or Word, or Promises, or Wayes, or Judgements, or Name, or Righteousnesse, or Truth, *&c.*

This Text that I have chosen, sets out the great benefit and comfort, which *David* found in the Law of God in the time of his affliction--- *It kept him from perishing. Had not thy Law been my delights, I had perished in my affliction.*

The word *Law* is taken diversly in Scripture, sometimes for the *Moral Law*, *James* 2. 10. Sometimes for the whole *Oeconomy, Polity*, and *Regiment* of *Moses*, for the whole *Mosaical dispensation* by Laws partly moral, partly Judicial, partly Ceremonial, *Gal.* 3. 23. Sometimes for the *five Books of Moses*, Luke 24. 44. Sometimes for the whole *Doctrine of God* contained in the *Scriptures of the Old Testament*, *John* 7. 49. By Law in this place is meant, all

those Books of the Scripture which were written when this Psalm was penned. But I shall handle it in a larger sense, as it comprehends all the Books both of the Old and New Testament. For the word *Law* is sometimes also taken for the *Gospel*, as it is *Micah* 4. 2. *Isa.* 2. 3. The meaning then is, *Unless thy Law*, that is, Thy *Word*, had been my *delights*, *I should have perished in mine affliction.*

David speaks this (saith *Musculus*) of the distressed condition he was in when persecuted by *Saul*, forced to flye to the *Philistines*, and sometimes to hide himself in the rocks and caves of the earth. *Hic vero simile est, fuisse illi ad manum codicem divinæ legis*, &c. It is very likely (saith he) that he had the Book of Gods Law with him, by the reading of which he mitigated and allayed his sorrows, and kept himself pure from communicating with the Heathen in their superstitions. The *Greek* Scholiasts say, That *David* uttered these words, *A Saule pulsus, & apud Philistæos & impios homines agere coactus*, when driven from *Saul*, and compelled to live amongst the wicked *Philistims* &c. for he would have been allured to have communicated with them in their impi-

impieties, had he not carried about him the meditation of the word of God. *Unless thy Law had been my delights*, &c.

In the words themselves, we have two Truths *supposed*, and one Truth clearly *proposed*.

1. Two Truths supposed.
   1 *That the dearest of Gods Saints, are subject to many great and tedious afflictions.*
   2 *That the word of God is the Saints darling, and delights.*

One truth clearly proposed.
That the Law of God delighted in, is the afflicted Saints Antidote against ruine, and destruction.

1 Two Truths supposed.
The first is this:

Doct. 1. *That the best of Gods Saints are in this life subject to many great and tedious afflictions.*

David was a man after Gods own heart, and yet he was a man made up of troubles of all sorts and sizes, insomuch as he professeth of himself, *Psal.* 69. 1, 2, 3. *Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul, I sink in deep mire where there is no standing, I am come into deep waters, where*

the floods ever-flow me.; I am weary of my crying, my throat is dryed, mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. And in this Text he professeth that his afflictions were so great, that he must necessarily have perished under them, had he not been sustained by the powerful comforts he fetched out of the word. There is an emphasis in the word *Then, I should then have perished.* That is, long before this time, *then, when* I was afflicted, then I should have perished. *Junius* and *Tremelius* translate it, *Jam diu periissem, &c.* I should long ago have perished. *Job* was a man *eminent* for godliness, and yet as eminent for afflictions. Nay Jesus Christ himself was *a man of sorrows*, Isa. 53. 3. Insomuch as that it is truly said, *God had one Son without sin, but no Son without sorrow.*

This our *dear Sister*, at whose Funeral we are met, was a woman full of many and great afflictions, which (no doubt) would have quite drowned, and swallowed her up, had not the *word of God* supported her, therefore it was that she desired that this Text might be the subject of her Funeral Sermon.

Quest.

Quest. *But why doth God afflict his own Children with such variety of long and great afflictions?*

Answ. 1. God doth not do this, because he *hates* them, but because he *loves* them, *For whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth, &c.* Heb. 12. 6. Did the Lord hate them, he would suffer them to go merrily to hell. *There is no surer sign of Gods reprobating anger, than to suffer a man to prosper in wicked courses.* God threatneth this as the *greatest punishment, not to punish them.* Hos. 4. 14. And therefore because God loveth his children, *he chastiseth them in this world, that they may not be condemned in the world to come,* 1 Cor. 11. 33.

2 God doth not do this, because he would *hurt* them, but for their *good*, Jer. 24. 5. The *good figs* were sent into captivity for their *good*. Heb. 12. 10. *He for our profit, &c.* God hath very gracious and merciful ends and aims in afflicting his people. Give me leave here to inlarge my discourse, and to give you an account of some of these divine aims.

1 Gods design is to teach us to *know him* and *to trust in him*, and *to know our selves*. It is a true saying of *Luther*, *Schola crucis, est*

Schola lucis, the School of *Affliction* is a School of *Instruction*; Gods παθήματα are μαθήματα, His *rods* (when sanctified) are powerful *Sermons* to teach us.

1. *To know God*, And *this is life eternal to know him*, John 17. 3. It is said of *Manasseh*, 2 Chron. 33. 13. *Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.* Then, when he was caught among the thorns, bound with fetters, and carried to *Babylon*; before that time he knew not the Lord: Afflictions teach us to know God, not only in his power and greatnesse, in his anger and hatred against sin, but also in his goodnesse and mercy; For *God* doth so *sweeten* the bitter cup of affliction, that a child of God doth many times tast more of Gods love in one months affliction, than in many years of prosperity, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4, 5. 2 *Cor.* 7. 4. Adde to this. Afflictions teach us to know God *Experimentally* and affectionatively, not *cerebraliter* (as *Calvin* saith) but *cordialiter*, so to know him, as to *love* and *fear* him, and to *flye* unto him as our rock and hiding-place in the day of our distresse. It is said, *Cant.* 3. 1. *By night I sought him whom my soul loveth, &c.* Some by the word *Night*, understand the night of divine desertion,

fertion, and from the words *Gilbertus* hath this saying; *Qui quærit in nocte, non quærit ut videat, sed ut amplectatur*; He that seeks after God in the night of adversity, doth not seek to see him, and know him formally and superficially, but to imbrace him, and to love him really and cordially: And therefore the Church never left till she had *found Christ*, and when she had found him, *she held him*, and would not let him go, *Cant.* 3. 2, 3, 4.

2 Not only to know God, but also *to trust in him*, 2 Cor. 1. 9. *We had the sentence of death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God, which raiseth the dead.* Note here, 1 That an Apostle is apt in time of prosperity, to trust in himself. 2 That God brings his children to the gates of death, that they might learn not to trust in themselves, but in God, which *raiseth the dead*, that is, from a dead and desperate condition.

3 Not only to know God, but to know our selves, which two are the chief parts of Christian Religion: It is said of the Prodigal, that when he was in adversity, then he *came to himself*, Luke 15. 17. *And when he came to himself.* He was *spiritually distra-*

distracted, when he was in prosperity; Afflictions teach us to know that we are but men, according to that of David, Psa. 9. 20. *Put them in fear O Lord, that they may know themselves to be but men.* Caligula and Domitian, Emperours of Rome, who in prosperity would be called Gods, when it thundred from Heaven were so terrified, that then they knew they were but men. In prosperity we forget our mortality. Adversity causeth us to know, not only that we are men, but frail men, that God hath us *between his hands*, (as it is Ezek. 21. 17.) and can as easily crush us, as we do moths; That we are in *Gods hands, as the clay in the hands of the Potter*: That he hath an absolute soveraignty over us, and that we depend upon him for our being, wel-being, and eternal being; these things we know feelingly and practically in the day of affliction. And it much concerns us to know these things, and to know them powerfully. For this will make us stand in awe of God, and study to serve and please him. He that depends upon a man for his livelihood, knowing that he hath him at an advantage, and can easily undo him, will certainly indeavour to comply with him,

and

and to obtain his favour. *The ground of all service and obedience is dependence.* And did we really and experimentally know our dependence upon God, and the advantages he hath us at, we could not, we would not but comply with him, and labour above all things to gain his love and favour.

The second Design of God in afflicting his Children.

2 Gods aim in afflicting his children, is either to *keep them from sin*, or when they have sinned, *to bring them to repentance for it, and from it.*

1 *To keep them from sin*, This made him send an *Angel of Satan* to buffet *Paul*, lest he should be *lifted up in pride, and exalted above measure*, 2 Cor. 12. 7.

2 When they have sinned, to bring them to *repentance for it, and from it.* God brings his children *low*, not to *trample* upon them, but to make them *low in their own eyes*, and to *humble* them for sin, *Deut.* 8. 2. God brings them into the *deep waters*, not to *drown* them, but to *wash* and *cleanse* them. Isa. 27. 9. *By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away sin, &c.* Afflictions (when sanctified) are divine Hammers, to break, and as *Moses* his Rod, to cleave our rocky hearts in pieces.

1 They

1 They open the eyes to see sin, *Oculos quos culpa claudit, pœna aperit.* When the brethren of *Joseph* were in adversity, then they saw (and not before) the greatness of their sin in selling their Brother, *Gen.* 42. 21.

They open the *ear to Discipline.* In prosperity we turn a deaf ear to the voyce of the Charmer, though he charm never so wisely. But adversity openeth the ear, and causeth us to attend: When God spake upon Mount *Sinah* in a terrible manner, then the people said unto *Moses, Speak thou unto us, all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it.* Deut. 5. 27. Memorable is that Text, Jer. 2. 24. *A wilde Asse used to the Wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure, in her occasion who can turn her away? all they that seek her, will not weary themselves, in her month they shall find her;* in her month, that is, when she is great with young, and near her time. A wicked man in the day of his prosperity, is like a wild Ass used to the wilderness, he snuffeth at any that shall reprove him, he is of an uncircumcised ear, and a rebellious heart, *but in his month,* that is, when he is *big with Afflictions,* then he will be easily found

found; this will open his ear to Discipline.

3 They will open the *mouth to confess sin*, Judge 10. 15.

4 They will *command us to depart from iniquity*, Job 36.8, 9, 10.

Afflictions are *Gods Furnaces*, to purge out the drosse of our sins, *Gods files* to pare off our spiritual rust, *Gods Fannes* to winnow out our chaffe. In prosperity we gather much soil, but adversity purgeth and purifieth us. This is its proper work, to work out unrighteousnesse, *Dan.* 11. 35. *Dan.* 12. 10.

The third Design.

3 Gods end is not only to keep us from sin, but to make us *holy and righteous*, therefore it is said, Isa. 26.9. *When thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousnes*, And *Heb.* 12. 10. *He for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness*. As the waters that drowned the old world, did not hurt the Ark of *Noah*, but bare it up above the earth, and as they increased, so the Ark was lifted up nearer and nearer to Heaven: So *Afflictions* (when sanctified) do not prejudice the Saints of God, but lift them up nearer unto God in *holiness, and heavenly-mindedness*.

4 Gods

The fourth Design.] 4 Gods design in afflicting his children, is to make the *world bitter* unto them, and *Christ sweet*. 1 To *imbitter the world*: There are two lame leggs upon which all worldly things stand, *uncertainty*, and *insufficiency*. All earthly things are like the earth, founded upon nothing. They are like *heaps made of wax*, that quickly melt away. Riches, and honours, wife, and children, have *wings, and flye away*; they are like unto *Absoloms Mule*, they will fail us, when we have most need of them; They may *puff up* the soul, but they cannot *satisfie it*, *inflare possunt, satiare animam non possunt*: They are all vanity and vexation of spirit, so saith the *Preacher*; but most people in time of health, will not beleeve these things; but when some great sickness betides them, this is as a *real Sermon*, to make out the truth of them; then they see, that a *Velvet slipper* cannot cure the Gout, nor a *golden cap* the head-ach, Prov. 10. 4. That riches avail not in the day of wrath, and this imbitters the world.

2 To make *Christ sweet and precious*. When *Christ* and his *Disciples* were in a ship together, Mat. 8. 25. It is said, *That Christ was asleep*, and as long as the Sea was ca!m,

calm, his Diſciples ſuffered him to ſleep, but when they were ready to be drowned, then they *awoke Chriſt*, and ſaid, *Maſter, ſave us, we periſh.* Even the beſt of Saints when fatted with outward plenty and abundance, are prone to ſuffer *Chriſt to lye aſleep within them*, and ſo neglect the lively actings of faith upon *Chriſt*; but when the ſtorms of affliction, and outward calamity begin to ariſe, and they are ready to be overwhelmed with diſtreſſes, then *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.*

3 Gods deſign in afflicting his children, is to *prove*, and *improve* their graces.

1 To *prove* their graces, Rev. 2. 10. Deut. 8. 2. to prove the *truth*, and the *ſtrength* of them. 1 The *truth and ſincerity of their graces*; For this cauſe he loaded *Job* with afflictions, to try whether he ſerved God for his Camels, and Oxen, or for love to God. As *Solomons* ſword tried the true *Mother* from the *falſe*; So the *ſword* of affliction diſcovers the ſincere Chriſtian from the hypocrite. Diſtreſſes are *divine touchſtones*, to try whether we be true or counterfeit Saints; *That grace is true, which upon tryal is found true.* 2 To try the *ſtrength*

of

of our graces. For it requires a ſtrong faith to endure great afflictions. That faith which will ſuffice for a little affliction, will not ſuffice for a great one. *Peter* had faith enough to come to Chriſt upon the Sea, but as ſoon as the ſtorm began to ariſe his Faith began to fail, and Chriſt ſaid, *Why art thou afraid, O thou of little Faith?* Mat. 14. 30, 31. It muſt be a *ſtrong faith* that muſt keep us from ſinking in the day of *great Diſtreſſe.*

2 To *improve our graces.* It is reported of the *Lioneſſe*, that ſhe leaves her young ones, till they have almoſt killed themſelves with roaring, and howling, and then at laſt gaſp, ſhe relieves them, and by this means they become more couragious. So God brings his children into the deeps, and ſuffers *Jonah* to be three dayes and three nights in the belly of the Whale, and *David* to cry till his throat *was dry*, Pſal. 69. 3. and ſuffers his Apoſtles to be all the night in a great ſtorm till the fourth watch, and then he comes and rebukes the winds, and by this means he mightily increaſeth their *patience* and *dependance* upon God, and their Faith in Chriſt. As the *Palm-tree*, the more it is depreſſed, the higher,

CANCELLED CHRIST'S COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

higher, ſtronger; and fruitfuller it grows; So doth the graces of Gods people.

Laſtly, Gods aim in afflicting his people, is to *put an edge upon their prayers, and all their other holy ſervices.*

1 Upon *Prayer:* What a famous Prayer did *Manaſſeh* make, when he was under his iron fetters. It is thrice mentioned, 2 *Chron.* 33.13,18,19. When *Paul* was ſtruck off his horſe, and ſtruck with blindneſs, then he prayed to purpoſe. Therefore it is ſaid *Acts* 9. 11. *Behold he prayeth!* In proſperity we pray heavily and drowſily, but adverſity adds wings to our prayers, *Iſa.* 26. 16. The very heathen Marriners cryed aloud to God in a ſtorm. It is an ordinary ſaying, *Qui neſcit orare diſcat navigare.* There are no Saylors ſo wicked, but they will pray when in a great ſtorm.

2 Upon *Preaching:* Proſperity glutteth the ſpiritual appetite, adverſity whetteth it.

3 Upon a *Sacrament:* How ſweet is a Sacrament to a true Saint after a long and great ſickneſs?

1 *It makes God, and the word of God precious.* If God ſets our Corn-fields on fire (as *Abſalome* did *Joabs*) then he ſhall be ſure to cauſe us to come running to him: And how ſweet is a Text of Scripture to a child of God in the hour of his diſtreſs?

By all this it appears that God afflicts his children not to *hurt them*, but to *help them*, and that God hath many glorious and gracious ends and aims in afflicting of them. Therefore it is that *David* ſaith of himſelf in 71. verſ. of this Pſalm. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes.* He never ſaid, It is good for me that I have been in proſperity, but he rather ſaith the contrary in the 67. *verſe. Before I were afflicted, I went aſtray, but now I have kept thy word. Gods people* will bleſs God as much (if not more) in *Heaven*, for their *adverſity*, than for their *proſperity*.

Vſe 1. Let us not paſs *raſh cenſures* upon *perſons* under *great afflictions*. Say not, ſuch a woman is a greater ſinner than others, becauſe more afflicted. This was the fault of *Jobs* friends, and God expreſ-

ſeth

seth his anger against them for it, *Job* 42. 7. *My wrath is kindled against thee, and thy two friends, for you have not spoken the thing that is right, &c.* This was the fault of the *Barbarians*, Acts 28. 4. *When they saw the venemous beast hang upon the hand of Paul, they said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer, &c.* But remember they were *Barbarians*. It is a sign of a *Barbarian*, not of a *Christian* to pass a rash censure upon persons in affliction. *Think you* (saith Christ) *that those eighteen upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell and slew them, that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay, but except you repent, ye shall all likewise perish*, Luke 13. 4, 5. Think you that they which have the Stone and Gout in extremity, that have Cancers in their faces and breasts, are greater sinners than others. I tell you nay, &c. For my part, if I would censure any, it should be such as live wickedly, and meet with no affliction: These have the *black brand* of reprobation upon them. These are men deligned to damnation. *Ambrose* would not tarry a night in the house of a Gentleman that had never in all his life been afflicted, for fear (as he

said) lest some great and sudden judgement should betide it. But when I see a godly woman afflicted, then I say, this is not so much for her sin, as for her trial: this is not to *hurt her*, but to *teach her* to know God, and to know her self, to break her heart for sin, and from sin, to make the world bitter, and Christ sweet. God hath put her into the fire of affliction, to refine her, and make her a vessel fit for his use. God is striking her with the hammer of affliction, that she may be squared, and made ready to be laid in the heavenly *Jerusalem*.

Vse 2. Here is *rich comfort to the children of God, under the greatest afflictions*. For the best of *Saints* are subject to the worst afflictions: This is the lot of all Gods children, Christ himself not excepted. *Afflictions* (indeed) considered in their own nature, are evil things, and so are called, *Amos* 5. 13. They are part of the curse due to sin, the fruit of Gods revenging wrath; they are as a biting & stinging Serpent. And to a wicked man, remaining wicked, they are the beginning of Hell: *Unsanctified afflictions parboil a*

wicked

wicked man for hell and damnation. But now to a child of God, they have lost both their name and nature, they are not *punishments* properly, but *chastisements*, not τιμωρίαι, but παιδεῖαι. They are not *satisfactory*, but *castigatory*. Jesus Christ hath taken away the *sting of these Serpents*; they are not *fiery*, but brazen Serpents, they have a *healing*, not a *hurting* power. Christ hath removed the curse, and bitterness of them; as the wood sweetned the *waters of Marah*, Exod. 15. 25. So Christs Cross hath sweetned the *bitterness* of Afflictions.

There are eight comfortable considerations, to chear the heart of a child of God in the day of his distress.

1 God never afflicts his people, but out of *pure necessity*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 6. *Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness.* As a most loving *Father*, never corrects his child, but when he is forced to it. He willingly provides for his child, but punisheth him unwillingly. So God freely loadeth with his blessings, but he never chastiseth his children, but when forced to it, therefore he saith expressly, *Lam.* 3. 33. *He doth not afflict willingly*, Isa. 27.

Fury is not in me. It is we that put Thunderbolts in Gods hand. If the Sun did not first draw up the vapours from the earth, there would never be any thundering, or lightning. God would never thunder from Heaven with his judgements, if our sins did not first cry to heaven for punishment. As Christ whipt the sellers of Oxen and Sheep out of the Temple with a *whip made* (in all probability) of *their own cords*; So God never scourgeth us, but it is with a whip made of our own sins, *Prov.* 5. 22. *Rom.* 2. 5.---*Thou treasurest up to thy self, &c.* God hath a *double treasure*, a *treasure of mercy*, and a *treasure of wrath*; his *treasure of mercy* is allwayes full, but his *treasure of wrath* is empty, till we fill it by our sins. And therefore when God punisheth his children, he calls it a *strange work*, and a *strange act*, Isa. 28. 21. It is observed of the Bee, that it never stings, but when provoked: Sure I am, that God never afflicts his children, but out of pure necessity.

1 Not only out of *pure necessity*, but out of true and real love; as I have shewed, *Heb.* 12. 6, 7, 8.

Object.

Object. *Do not divine afflictions proceed out of anger? Was not God angry with Moſes for ſpeaking unadviſedly with his lips? And angry with David for his Adultery, and thereupon afflicted both of them?*

Anſw. This anger was a fatherly anger, rooted in love; It was not *ira quæ reprobat*, but *ira quæ purgat:* It was not *ira hoſtilis & exterminativa*, but *ira paterna & medicinalis*. As it is a great puniſhment for God ſometimes not to puniſh, *Iſa.* 1. 5. *Hoſ.* 4. 14. So it is a great mercy, ſometimes for God to withdraw his mercy.

3 Afflictions are a part of *Divine predeſtination*. That God which hath *elected* us to *ſalvation*, hath alſo *elected us unto afflictions*, 1 Theſ. 1. 2. *That no man ſhould be moved by theſe afflictions, for you your ſelves know that we are appointed thereunto.* The ſame love with which God elects us, and beſtoweth Chriſt, and his Spirit upon us, with the very ſame love he afflicts us.

4 They are part of the *gracious Covenant* which God hath made with his people, *Pſal.* 89. 31, 32, 33. In which

words we have three things considerable.

1 A supposition of sin; *If his children forsake my Law, &c.* For sin is allwayes *causa sine qua non*, the cause without which God will never chastise us, and for the most part it is the cause for which he doth chastise us.

2 We have a gracious promise, *Then I will visit their transgression with the Rod, and their iniquity with stripes.*

3 We have a merciful qualification: *Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail, my Covenant will I not break, &c.* Afflictions are not only *mercies*, but *Covenant-mercies*; Therefore *David* saith, *Psal.* 119. 75. -- *And that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.* God would be *unfaithful*, if he did not afflict his children.

5 Consider that afflictions are part of the *Saints blessedness*, Job 5.17. *Behold! happy is the man whom God correcteth, &c.* Behold (saith *Eliphaz*) and we had need behold, and consider it, for there are few that beleeve it, and yet it is most true; That afflictions (when sanctified) when they are not only *corrections*, but *instructi-*

ons,

ons, then they are evidences that we are in a bleſſed condition. *Eliphaz* his ſaying muſt be interpreted by what *David* ſaith, *Pſal.*94. 12. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſtneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt out of thy Law*; It is not *correction* ſimply, but *correction* joyned with *inſtruction*, which intitles us to happineſs. *Job even while he was upon the dunghill, wonders that God ſhould ſet his heart ſo much upon him, as to viſit him every morning, and try him every moment*, Job 7. 17, 18. *Job* upon the Dung-hil, was happier than *Adam* in Paradiſe. *Adam* in Paradiſe was conquered by the Devil; but *Job* upon the Dung-hill overcame the Devil. *Lazarus* in his Rags, was happier then *Dives* in his Robes; *Philpot* in his Cole-houſe, then *Bonner* in his Palace; and godly Mr. *Whitaker* upon his Bed of pain, than a wicked man upon his Bed of Down. There were many in Chriſts time who would never have known him, or come to him, had it not been for their bodily diſeaſes.

6 Conſider the *gracious and merciful ends, aims, and deſigns*, that God hath in afflicting his people, what theſe are, ye have heard already.

7 The

7 The *sweet and precious promises*, which he hath made to his children in the day of their adversity, to comfort them, and support them; what these are, you shall hear afterwards.

8 Consider that all *afflictions* shall work at last for the good of *Gods children*. Rom. 8. 28. Though they are not *bona*, yet they shall be in *bonum*; Though they are not good in themselves, yet they shall turn to their good. God beats his children, as we do our cloaths *in the Sun*, only to beat out the *Moths*; God puts them into the fiery furnace, not to hurt them, but only to *untye the bonds of their sins*, as he dealt with the three children, *Dan.* 3. 25. God will either deliver them out of their *afflictions*, or send them to Heaven by them; Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Vse 3. If the best of Saints are subject in this life unto many, great, and tedious *afflictions*, then let us.

1 *Expect*
2 *Prepare* for } *Afflictions.*
3 *Improve*

1 Let

1 Let us *expect Afflictions*; for Christ hath said expresly, *John* 16. 33. *In the world ye shall have tribulation.* There is in every child of God,

1 *Sufficiens Fundamentum*, *A sufficient Foundation* for God to build *a house of Correction* upon: There is sin enough to deserve affliction.

2 There is *sufficiens Motivum*, *Motives sufficient* to prevail with God, to chastize them when they sin against him; some of these you have heard already, let me adde one more: Because he is more *dishonoured* by the sins of his own children, than by the sins of wicked men: As it is a greater discredit to an *earthly Father*, when his own children, than when other mens children, live wickedly; so it is a *greater disparagement* to our *heavenly Father* when his own Sons and Daughters, than when the Devils children transgress his Law: And therefore God will chastise them *sooner*, *surer*, and *more* than others. 1 *Sooner*, Rom. 2. 9. *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.* First, the Jew, and then the Gentile. 2 *Surer* than others. *Amos* 3. 2. *You only*

have

have I known of all the Families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. 3 *More* than others, *Lam.*4. 6. *The punishment of the iniquity of the Daughter of my people, is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodome*, &c. Dan. 9. 12. *Under the whole heaven hath not been done, as hath been done upon Jerusalem.*

3 There is *sufficiens necessitas sufficient necessity* to provoke God to afflict them. It is needfull that the Wheat be winnowed, that so the chaffe may be separated from it. It is needful that the Wind blow upon the Wheat, to cleanse it, and that Gold be put into the furnace, to purge and purifie it. When the *Sheep of Christ* are divided one from the other in judgement, and affections, when separated in *Doctrine*, *worship*, and *Discipline*; it is very needful that God should send afflictions and distresses, which may be (as the *Shepherds dog*) very serviceable and instrumental, to unite them together, and to gather them into one *Sheep-fold*. And therefore let the Saints of God expect afflictions.

Gods people are to

2 Let us *prepare and provide against the day of tribulation*. Let us provide,

1 *A ſtock of graces.* For ſickneſs is a time to ſpend grace, but not to get grace. A Chriſtian in ſickneſs without grace, is like a Souldier in war without Armour; like a houſe in ſtormy weather without a foundation, and like the men of the old world, when ready to be drowned, without an Ark. Wo be to that perſon that hath his graces to get when he ſhould uſe them! And therefore if we would be comforted in the day of tribulation, we muſt provide afore-hand a furniture of graces.

prepare for afflictions.

1 A ſtock of graces.

1 *A true Faith* (for a *painted Faith* will avail no more than a *painted Helmet* or a *painted Ship*) and not only a *True*, but alſo a *ſtrong faith*. A little faith will faint under great afflictions; when the winds began to blow fiercely, *Peters* little Faith began to fail, *Matth.* 14. 30.

2 *A great meaſure of patience* to inable us to wait quietly and contentedly, till God come in with help, for many times he tarrieth till the fourth watch of the night, as he did, *Matth.* 14. 25. And therefore we have need of patience to keep us from murmuring or repining.

3 *A great ſtock of ſelf-denyall, humility, repentance, contempt of the world, and heavenly-mindedneſs.* He that is furniſhed with grace in an evil hour, will be as ſafe and ſecure, as *Noah* was in the Ark, in the time of the Deluge, or as thoſe were who had ſufficiency of corn in the time of the ſeven years dearth in *Ægypt*.

2 A ſtock of Aſſurance.

2 *A ſtock of aſſurance of ſalvation*: For though a man hath never ſo much grace, yet if he wants the aſſurance of it, he cannot receive any comfort by it in the day of his diſtreſs. *Jacob* was not at all quieted in his ſpirit, for *Joſephs* being alive, till he came to know of it. And therefore we muſt not only provide *grace* but the aſſurance of grace, that we may be able to ſay with confidence, as *Job* did upon the dunghil, *Job* 19. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, and with the holy Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 38. *I am perſwaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* That man who hath got a Scripture aſſurance of his ſalvation, will be more

more than a Conqueror in the day of his distresse.

3 *A stock of Divine Experiences.* Happy is that man that lodgeth up in his heart all the former Experiences he hath had of Gods love and mercy towards him, and knoweth how to argue from them in the day of calamity: Thus did *Moses* in his prayer to God, *Numb.* 14. 19. *Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatnesse of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Ægypt, even untill now.* Because God had forgiven them, therefore *Moses* intreats him to forgive them; this Argument is drawn from former Experience. And thus *David* incourageth himself, 1 *Sam.* 17. 37. *The Lord hath delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon, and out of the paw of the Bear, and he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.* Thus also *Paul* reasoneth, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, and in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us!* Divine experiences are the Saints great incouragements in the day of Affliction. Blessed is the man that hath his Quiver full of these Arrows.

3 A stock of Divine Experiences.

4 A ſtock of Sermons.

4 *A ſtock of Sermons.* We muſt do with Sermons, as the Tradeſ-men do with the money they get; ſome of it they lay out for their preſent uſe, and ſome of it they lay up againſt the time of ſickneſs. That man is an ill husband, and an unthrifty Tradeſ-man that makes no proviſion for old age, or for an evil day; and that man is an unprofitable hearer of the word, who doth not ſtock and ſtore himſelf with Sermons, whereby he may be comforted in the hour of affliction. And therefore the Prophet *Iſaiah* adviſeth us; *Iſa.* 42. 23. *To hear for the time to come*, or (as it is in the Hebrew) *for the after-time.* Sermons are not only to be heard for our preſent uſe, but to be laid up for after-times; that when we lye upon our ſick-beds, and cannot hear Sermons, we may then live upon the Sermons we have heard.

5 A ſtock of Scripture-promiſes.

5 And laſtly, We muſt prepare and provide a *ſtock of Scripture-promiſes*, which will be as ſo many reviving Cordials, to chear us, and as ſo many *ſpiritual Anchors*, to uphold us from periſhing in the day of our tribulation. What theſe promiſes are, you ſhall hear afterwards: Theſe upheld

David

David in the hour of his diſtreſs, and therefore he ſaith in the Text, *Unleſs thy Law had been my delight, I had periſhed in mine affliction.* If this our *dear ſiſter* had not had this ſtock, ſhe had been quite *overwhelmed* under the grievouſn eſſof her tormenting pains. Be wiſe therefore, O *ye Saints of God*, and prepare theſe five proviſions in the time of health, that ſo ye may live joyfully in the time of ſickneſs.

3 As we muſt expect and provide for afflictions, ſo alſo we muſt labour (when afflicted) *to improve them for our ſpiritual benefit and advantage.* We muſt pray more for the ſanctification of them, than for their removal: It was not the *ſtaffe* of *Eliſha* that revived the dead child, but *Eliſha* himſelf. It was not the *troubling* of the waters of the Pool of *Bethezda*, that made them healing, but the coming down of the *Angel*. It was not the *Clay and ſpittle* that cured the blind eyes, but *Chriſts anointing* them with it. It was not the *cloak* of *Elijah* that divided the waters but the God of *Elijah*: Troubles, ſtroaks, blows, afflictions, and diſtreſſes will do us no good, unleſs the Lord be pleaſed to

3 Gods people are to improve afflictions.

make them effectuall: And therefore let us pray unto God that he would give us grace together with our affliction. That he would add *instruction* to his *correction*, that he would make us *good Scholars in the Schoole of afflictions*, and inable us to take out all those excellent lessons, which he would have us to learn in it, that thereby we may come to know God *more powerfully, and experimentally, and to know our selves, and our own frailty, and our absolute dependance upon God more effectually*, that thereby we may be more *purified* and *refined*, that the *wind* of *temptation* may *cleanse* us from the *chaffe* of our *corruption*, that we may *learn righteousnes* by Gods *judgements*, and be made partakers of his *holinesse*. Such a good Scholar was *Manasseh*, he got more good by his *Iron chain*, than by his *Golden chain*. Such another was the *Prodigal child*, who was *happier* amongst the *Swine*, than when in his *Fathers house*. Such was *Paul*, his being *strucken* down to the ground, raised him up to Heaven; by the blindnes of his body, his soul received sight; and he was turned from a persecuting *Saul*, to a persecuted *Paul*. Such another was *David*, who professeth

fesseth of himself, *That it was good for him that he was afflicted*; and such Scholars ought we to be.

There are some that are *arrant Dunces* in this School, that are like unto the *bush* which *Moses* saw, which burned with fire but was not consumed; the fire did not consume the Thorny bush. Many such *thorny* Sinners are burnt up with the fire of divine afflictions, but their sins are not consumed. Of these the Prophets complain, *Amos* 4.6,7,8,9,10,11,12.—*Yet they have not returned, &c.* Jer. 5.3. *Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return.* Rocks and stones by hewing and polishing may be made fit for a building: But there are some men who by no afflictions will be amended. *The mountains melt at the presence of the Lord, and the rocks rend asunder, when he is angry*: But there are some that have made their *faces harder* than the *Rocks*, and the *Mountains*, and are not at all affected with Gods anger. Of such as these *Bernard* complains, *Multi humilitati, pauci humiles, corripimur, sed non*

corrigimur, plectimur, ſed non flectimur; Multo facilius fregeris quam flexeris. Non ceſſant vitia civium uſque ad excidia civitatum; Prius eſt interire quam corrigi. Prius ipſos, quam in ipſis vitia non eſſe.

There are others that are the *worſe for their afflictions*, like the *Smiths Anvil*, the more they are ſtricken, the harder they are: Such a one was King *Ahaz*, Chron. 28. 22. *In the time of his diſtreſſe he did treſpaſſe yet more againſt the Lord:* There is a brand put upon him--This is that King *Ahaz*, that wicked King *Ahaz*, that reprobate King *Ahaz*. As Pearls put in Vinegar loſe their colour and beauty, ſo many, when under Gods hand, loſe all their glory and excellency, and begin to diſtruſt Gods Providence, to call his juſtice into queſtion, to murmur and repine againſt Gods dealings, and to uſe unlawful means for their deliverance. Of theſe the Prophet *Iſaiah* complains, Iſa. 1. 5. *Why ſhould you be ſtricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more*; Such was *Ahaziah*, 2 Kings 1. 2. that ſought for help from *Baalzebub the god of Ekron*; and ſuch was *Saul*, who ſought to the Witch of

of *Endor* for health in the day of his diſtreſs.

Both of *theſe* ſorts are in a ſad and miſerable condition; For God hath two Furnaces, the *Furnace of Affliction*, and the *Furnace of Hell-fire*. If the firſt Furnace will not purge us, the ſecond will everlaſtingly conſume us. As the *Roman Conſuls* had a man appointed to go before them, carrying a *Rod*, and an *Axe*; a *Rod* for the puniſhing of *corrigible offenders*, an *Axe* for the deſtruction of *incorrigible*; So God hath his *Rod*, and his *Axe*, his *Pruning-Knife*, and his *Chopping-Knife*, his *Warning-peeces*, and his *Murdering-peeces*. Afflictions are his *Rods* to correct us for our ſin, his *Pruning Knife* to pare off our luxuriant branches; his *Warning-Peeces* to call upon us to repent.

But if his *Warning-Peeces* will do us no good, we muſt expect his *Murdering-peeces*. If his *Pruning-Knife* will not amend us, his *Chopping-Knife* will confound us. If his *Rods* will not reclaim us, then his *Axe* will hew us down, and caſt us into everlaſting fire. God hath *three houſes*, the *houſe of Inſtruction*, of *Correction*, and of *De-*

ſtruction. The place where Gods people meet to hear his word, is his *houſe of Inſtruction*. And if we profit in this houſe, he will never carry us unto the *houſe of Correction*. But if we be ſtubborn and rebellious in the *houſe of Inſtruction*, then he will ſend us to the *houſe of Correction*. And if we profit in this houſe, he will never ſend us into the *houſe of Deſtruction*. But if we continue incorrigible in the *houſe of Correction*, he will inevitably ſend us to the *houſe of Deſtruction*, that is, unto Hell fire.

And therefore whenſoever God brings us into the School of Affliction, let us labour to be good Scholars in it; and to anſwer all thoſe ends, aims, and deſigns which God hath in afflicting of us. Let us pray to God that our afflictions may be Divine Hammers to break our hearts for ſin, and from ſin, may make the *world bitter*, and *Chriſt more precious*, may *prove* and *improve* our graces, and may put an *edge* upon all holy duties.

There are two things I would have you in an eſpecial manner to labour after.

1 *Labour when afflicted, to know the meaning of Gods Rod.*

2 *That the good you get by afflictions may abide upon you after your recovery from them.*

Gods people are to labour to know the meaning of Gods Rod.

1 You muſt labour to know the meaning of Gods Rod, and what the particular arrant is, which he hath to you in the day of your diſtreſſes, you muſt do as *David* did, 2 *Sam.* 21. 1. He enquired of the Lord *to know the reaſon why he ſent a Famine amongſt them.* So muſt you, you muſt pray as *Job* doth, *Job* 10. 2. *Shew me, O Lord, wherefore thou contendeſt with me?* When the cauſe of a diſeaſe is found out, it is half cured. Your great care therefore muſt be to ſtudy to know the particular cauſe and reaſon, why God turns your proſperity into adverſity. The Prophet *Micah* tells us, *Micah 6. 9.* That *the Rod hath a voyce*, and that the *man of wiſdom ſhall ſee Gods Name upon it.* There is a great meaſure of ſpirituall Art and Wiſdom required, to inable a man to hear this voyce, and to underſtand the language of it. A ſpiritual Fool cannot do it.

How we may know the meaning of Gods Rod.

Queſt. *What muſt we do, that we may underſtand the voyce of the Rod?*

Anſw. You muſt know that the Rod of God ordinarily ſpeaks *three languages*, it is ſent for *correction for ſin*, for the *trial and exerciſe of Grace*, and for *inſtruction in holineſs*; Sometimes indeed it is ſent only for *trial* and *inſtruction*, and not at all for ſin. Upon this account was *Job* afflicted, and the blind man, *John* 9. 3. But for the moſt part it hath a *threefold voyce*; it is appointed for *inſtruction*, *probation*, and alſo for *Correction*, Lam. 3. 39. Iſa. 42. 24. Luke 1. 20. 1 Cor. 11. 30.

Queſt. *How ſhall a man know whether his afflictions be only for* trial and inſtruction, *and not at all for ſin?*

Anſw. The ſafeſt and beſt way for a Chriſtian in this caſe, is to beleeve that all his afflictions are both for trial and inſtruction, and alſo for ſin: Indeed when he ſeeth another man, who is very godly, grievouſly diſeaſed, he may charitably beleeve, that this is for his trial, and not for his ſin; but when it is his own caſe, then (as D. *Ames* ſaith moſt excellently) *Æquiſſimum, tutiſſimum, & Deo gratiſſimum eſt, ut in afflictionibus omnibus*

bus peccata noſtra intueamur, quæ illas vel directè procurarunt, vel ſaltem promeruerunt. Quamvis enim omnes afflictiones non immittantur ſemper directè, & præcipuè propter peccatum, peccatum tamen eſt omnium afflictionum fons & fundamentum, Rom. 5. 12. ----

"It is moſt equal, moſt ſafe, and moſt acceptable to God, to have an eye upon "our ſins, which have either directly "procured them, or at leaſt deſerved "them. For, though afflictions are "not alwayes ſent directly and eſpecially "for ſin, yet ſin is the original and foun- "dation of all afflictions.

How to find out the particular ſin for which God afflicts us.

Queſt. *What courſe muſt we take to find out what that* ſin *is in* particular, *for which God corrects us?*

Anſw. 1. Sometimes we may read our ſin in our puniſhment. *Adonibezek*, though a Heathen King, did this, *Judg.* 1. 7. *Threeſcore and ten Kings, having their Thumbs, and their great Toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table; as I have done, ſo God hath requited me.* I read of holy *Ephraim*, that he was converted by the ſuitableneſs of his affliction, unto the ſin he had committed, for he ſaw clearly that his miſery came not by chance, but from

from God immediately, and for sin. As a man may sometime gather the disease of the Patient by observing the Physitians Bill; so he may guess at his sin, by considering his punishment.

2 Consider what *that sin* is for which thy Conscience doth most of all accuse thee. Conscience is Gods Vicegerent, his bosome Preacher. And when we sleight the voyce of Conscience, God seconds it with the voyce of his Rod, which speaks the very same language that Conscience doth.

3 Consider what is the sin of thy *Complexion*, and *Constitution*, what is thy *Dilectum delictum*, thy *peccatum in deliciis*, thy beloved sin, what is that sin to which thou art most of all inclined, and if that sin prevail over thee, and thou canst not say with *David*, Psal. 18. 23. *I have kept my self from mine iniquity*. It is very probable that for the subduing of that sin, thou art corrected of God.

4 If ever thou hast been at the gates of death, despairing of life, consider what that sin was, which did then most of all trouble and perplex thy Conscience, or if ever thou hast been in a dream, supposing

ſing thy ſelf to be dying, and breathing out thy laſt; what was that ſin which did then moſt of all affright thee. It is very likely that God by afflicting thee, intends to get that ſin more conquered and mortified.

5 Conſider what thoſe ſins are for which thy *godly Miniſter* (under whoſe care thou liveſt) doth reprove thee, and of which thy *true* and *real friends* do accuſe thee; for, if thou haſt ſleighted the *voyce* of thy faithful Miniſter, and friends; ſurely *God* out of his love to thee, followeth their advice with the voyce of his Rod, that thereby he may open thine ear to Diſcipline, and command thee to depart from thoſe iniquities.

But if thou canſt not find out that *particular ſin*, for which God afflicts thee, labour to repent of every ſin, and then thou wilt be ſure to repent of that ſin. If thou canſt not find out the *Bee* that ſtings thee, pull down the whole *Hive*, or the *thorn* that *pricks* thee, pull down the whole *Hedge*. Do that out of wiſdome, which *Herod* did out of malice, who becauſe he could not find out the *Babe Jeſus*, killed all the *children in Bethelem from two years old*, two and 2 years old

under, that so he might be sure to kill Jesus. Let us seek the utter ruine and death of all our sins, and then we shall be sure to destroy that sin for which God afflicts us, and when the cause is removed, the disease will forthwith be cured, and the Allmighty pacified, and reconciled unto us.

The good we get by our afflictions must remain with us after our recovery.

2 Let us *labour that the good we reap by our afflictions, may abide upon us after our recovery from them.* There are very many who while they are under the Rod, seem to be very penitent, and do purpose and promise to amend their lives, but as soon as the Rod is removed, they return like the Dog to the vomit, *&c.* Such was *Pharoah*, whilest he was plagued he confessed his sin, and prayed for pardon, but as soon as ever the judgement was gone, he hardned his heart. Such were the Israelites, *Psal.* 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. *They were not stedfast, they turned back.* Just like a truantly School-boy, who while his Master is whipping him, will promise any thing, but when it is done, forgets presently to do what he promised: Or like unto *water*, which while it is upon the fire is *very hot*, but as soon as ever it is taken off

off the fire, presently growth cold. I knew a man who in the time of his sicknes was so terrified in his conscience for his sins, that he made the very Bed to shake upon which he lay, and cryed out all night long, *I am damned, I am damned*, and made many and great Protestations of amendment of life, if God would be pleased to recover him. In a little while he did recover, and being recovered, was as bad, and as wicked as ever before.

And therefore let us labour that the good we get by our afflictions, may not vanish away with our afflictions, but may abide on us after we are recovered, that we may be able to say with *David*, *It is good for me that I was afflicted*, not only that *I am*, but that *I was*. *David* praiseth God in health for the good he had got in sickness, and which still *abode* with him. Let us say with the same Prophet, *Psal.* 66. 13, 14. *I will go into thy house with burnt offerings, I will pay thee my vows which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.* Let us pray unto God that his afflictions may not only skin over our spiritual diseases, and coup up our sins, but mortifie them, and so

so change our natures, that we may never return to folly.

I will conclude this point with a famous saying of *Plinius Secundus*, worthy to be written in letters of gold. A friend writes to him, and intreats him to give him advice how to frame his life, so as he might live as becomes a good man. He returns him this answer: I will not prescribe many rules, there is this one only which I commend to thee above all other. *Ut tales esse perseveremus sani, quales nos futuros profitemur infirmi. Let us labour to continue and persevere to be such, when we are well, as we purpose, and promise to our selves to be, when we are sick.* There is hardly any man so wicked, but he will in sickness make many and great promises of a new life, and of universal reformation if God would restore him. Now then if we not only be such, but continue to be such when restored, as we promise to be when sick; then we shall be excellent *Scholars* in the School of affliction, and God will either (as I have already said) deliver us out of affliction, or send us to heaven by affliction. So much for the first Truth supposed. *The End of the first Sermon.*

THE

THE Word of God IS THE Saints delight.

SERMON II.

PSAL. 119. 92.

Unless thy Law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

NOw I come to speak of the second Truth supposed in the Text.

That the Word of God is the Saints darling, and delights; Not onely

only their *delight*, but in the plural number their *delights*, that is (as our *Annotations* say) a Saint doth greatly delight in Gods Law, or as *Junius*, All the delight of a Saint is in Gods Law; Gods word is the center of his delights. *Nisi lex tua esset omnis oblectatio mea*; Many were the troubles & sorrows of *Davids* life, but against them all he found as many comforts and delectations in Gods Word, therefore he saith, vers. 29. *Thy Testimonies are my delights*, &c. and 143. *Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me, yet thy Commandements are my delights*: And in the Text, *Unlesse thy Law had been my delights*, &c. Whilest others delight in vanity and iniquity, whilest others take pleasure in hunting, hawking, carding, dicing, eating, and drinking, the Saints of God, can say with *Austin*, *Sacræ Scripturæ tuæ sunt sanctæ delicia meæ*, *Thy holy Scriptures are my holy delights*.

Reasons why the Saints take so much delight in Gods Law.

Quest. *Why do the Saints of God take such delight in the Law of God?*

Answ. 1. Because they are spiritually inlightned; their eyes are opened to behold the glory and beauty, and to understand the deep mysteries of the Law, there-

therefore *David* prayeth, verſ. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* As the Apoſtle ſaith of the Jewes, 2 *Cor.* 3. 14, 15, 16. *That to this day there is a vail over their hearts, when Moſes is read, and when they ſhall turn to the Lord, this vail ſhall be removed:* So it is with Chriſtians; when a wicked man reads the word, there is a vail over his eyes, and over his heart, and over the Scriptures, *The god of this world hath ſo blinded his eyes*, that he cannot behold the beauty and glory of them; but the true Saint hath this vail removed, Chriſt hath anointed his eyes with *ſpiritual eye-ſalve*; he ſeeth a ſurpaſſing excellency in the Word of God, and therefore cannot but delight in it.

2 Becauſe they are not only *illightned*, but *regenerated*; And as children new born by the inſtinct of nature, have a naturall appetite to milk for conſervation of their life; ſo the new born Saint, by the inſtinct of grace, hath a ſpiritual appetite to the Word of God, according to that of Saint *Peter*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new born babes deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.* The Word of God is

the Saints food, and as it is impossible for a Child unborn to desire food, so for a man unregenerated to hunger after, and take true pleasure in the Word; and as it is impossible for a new born child, not to delight in Milk, so it is as impossible for a regenerate Christian, not to delight in the Law of God.

3 Because a true Saint hath the Law of God *written in his heart*, according to that precious promise of the Covenant of grace, *Jer.* 31. 33. *I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* A Saints heart is the counterpane to Gods Law. The Law is within his heart, *Psa.* 40. 8. and as it is in the Hebrew, in the midst of his bowels, *in medio viscerum*. God hath infused a principle of grace into his inward parts, whereby he is not only inclined, but inabled to walk in all the Commandements of the Law blameless. A true Saint hides the Law in his heart, as a *choice Jewel* in a most precious Cabinets as *David* saith, vers. 9. *I have hid thy Law in my heart*, Hid it as a rare treasure. So doth every Saint, and therefore cannot but delight in it.

4 Because the same *holy Spirit*, that wrote

wrote the word, *dwelleth in every true Saint*. It is certain that all Scripture is of *Divine inspiration*, and that *the holy men of God spake as they were guided by the Holy Ghost*. And it is as certain, That the same Holy Ghost dwelleth in every Saint, *Rom.* 8. 11. And by vertue of the indwelling of the Spirit, they are sweetly and powerfully drawn to make the Law of God their chiefest delight.

5 Because it is *Gods indictement, and invention*. This reason is brought in the Text, *Unlesse thy Law, &c.* It is the Law of that God in whom they delight. It transcribes the mind and heart of God. A true Saint seeth the *Name, Authority, Power, Wisdome*, and *Goodness* of God in every letter of it, and therefore cannot but take pleasure in it. It is an Epistle sent down to him from the God of heaven. It is one of the greatest *Love-tokens* that ever God gave to his Church. There are two great Gifts that God hath given to his people. The *Word Christ*, and the *Word of Christ*. Both are unspeakably great. But the first will do us no good without the second.

6 A true Saint cannot but delight in the word of God, becauſe it is his *inheritance*, verſ. 111. *Thy teſtimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart.* Therefore they were the rejoycing of his heart, becauſe they were his everlaſting Inheritance.

7 Becauſe he finds a *ſweetneſs in it.* Delight is nothing elſe but a paſſion of the ſoul, ariſing from the ſweetneſs of the object that we enjoy. Things that are good, preſent, ſuitable, and ſweet, are the object of our delights, ſuch is the word of God to every true Saint. It is *ſweeter than the honey, and the honey-comb*, Pſal. 19. 10. So alſo *Pſal.* 119. 103. *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſt, yea ſweeter than honey to my mouth.* A Saint muſt needs delight in it; it is ſo ſuitable, and ſo ſweet.

8 Becauſe he *loves the Law.* Now that which we love, we cannot but delight in, when we come to enjoy it. A true Saint doth not only love the Law, but he loves it exceedingly, *Pſal.* 119. 167. *My ſoul hath kept thy teſtimonies, and I love them exceedingly.* A true Saint can ſay with *David*, Pſal. 119. 97. *Oh how do I love thy Law!*

Law! and verſ. 127. *I love thy Commandements above gold, yea above fine gold:* And verſ. 72. *The Law of thy mouth is better to me than thouſands of gold and ſilver.* Now becauſe the Saints of God are ſo inamoured with the Law of God, therefore it is, that they cannot but delight in it, as *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 119. 47. *I will delight my ſelf in thy Commandements, which I have loved.* He that loves the Commandements (as all Saints do) cannot but delight in them.

Vſe. This ſhews that there are but few *true Saints* amongſt us. There are many *baſtard Saints*, and *nominal Saints*, but few true and real Saints. We live in an age, wherein there were never more *Saints*, and never fewer, never more by outward *Profeſſion*, and never fewer by a holy *Converſation*. It is the property of a true Saint to make the word of God his darling and delights.

But where ſhall we find ſuch Saints? It is eaſie to find out men that can ſay, *Eating and drinking is my delight, carding and dicing is my delight, reading of vain and trifling books is my delight, to ſatisfie the luſts of*

the flesh is my delight. But where is the man that can truly say as *David* doth? *The Law of God is my delight, and the joy and rejoycing of my heart for ever. Austin* professeth of himself, that before *his Conversion*, he took no pleasure in the Word of God. His proud heart (as he saith) would not stoop to the humble expressions of it. After *his Conversion*, he was ravished with the beauty and excellency of the Scriptures, but before his Conversion, he saw no excellency in them. *Politian* (though a great Schollar, yet a notorious Atheist) professeth most blasphemously, that he never lost more time than in reading the Scripture. And it is reported of *Plato*, that when he had read the first Chapter of *Genes.*, he said, *Hic vir multa dicit, sed nihil probat.* This man saith many things, but proveth nothing. Where shall we find the man that puts a due estimation upon the word of God? That prizeth it *above gold, yea above much fine gold? That reioyceth in thy word, as much as in all riches*, vers. 14. That can appeal to God, and say as *David*, vers. 159. *Consider, Oh Lord, how I love thy Precepts?* and vers 97. *Oh how do I love thy Law?* There are some

men

men that can delight in any thing but in God, and his Word, and his Ordinances? They can delight in the creatures of God, but cannot delight in the Ordinances of God. They can delight in the gifts of God, in riches, and health, and honours: But they cannot delight in the God of these gifts. They can delight in books of Philosophy, and Humanity, but they cannot delight in the word of God.

Mark the sad condition that these are in.

It is a certain sign that there is a vail over their eyes and hearts, that they are not yet annointed with Christs *eye-salve*, that the God of the world hath blinded their eyes, that they cannot see the glorious excellencies of the Law of God.

It is certain, that they are not *born anew*, for if they were new born babes, they would desire the sincere milk of the word.

It is certain, that the *Law of God* is not yet *written in their hearts*, and that the *Spirit of God* doth not dwell in them. It is certain, that they have no part, nor portion in the word of God, that they never

tasted the sweetness that is in it, and that they have no true love to God, nor to his word. It is a true saying, *Qui regem amat, legem amat*, he that loves a King, will love his Law. And I may say, *Qui Deum amat, legem Dei amat*: He that loves God, will love the *Law of God*, which is nothing else but his Image, and his Picture, his last Will and Testament, his blessed Love-token. And therefore if you delight not in the Law of God, it is evident you do not delight in the God of this Law. And if you delight not in God, he will not delight in you; unless it be to *laugh at your destruction*, as it is *Prov.* 1. 26.

Q. *But how shall I know whether I do delight in the Word of God, or no?*

Answ. You shall know it by these notes.

1 He that delights in Gods Law, will be very frequent in *meditating* and *reading* of it, and very often in speaking of it. Thus saith *David*, Psal. 1. 2. *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and therein he will meditate day and night.* And *Psal.* 119.

97. *Oh how do I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day.* So alſo verſ. 15, 16. 23. He that takes pleaſure in the Law, he will be often thinking of it, as Chriſt ſaith Matth. 6. 21. *Where the treaſure is, there the heart will be alſo.* If the word of God be thy treaſure, thou wilt meditate on it, *Cogitatione crebrâ, longâ, & profundâ.* Thou wilt frequently think of it, and when thou beginneſt to think of it, thou wilt dwell upon the thought of it, as a Bee dwells (as it were) upon the flower to ſuck out the ſweetneſſe that is in it, and thou wilt think of it with deep and ſerious meditations and contemplations, thou wilt *dive* into the unſearchable riches and treaſures that are in the word. And as thou wilt meditate on it, ſo thou wilt be often, and unweariſome in reading and peruſing of it and diſcourſing about it. A man that delights in hunting, is never weary of talking of hunting, and he that delights in the world, of ſpeaking about the world; and if you delight in Gods word, you would be very frequent, and indefatigable in diſcourſing of it.

2 If you delight in the *Word* of God, you would delight in the *Ministers and Ambassadors* of the Word, lawfully commissionated by Christ: For the great work of the Ministry is to expound and apply the Word; and therefore if you dis-respect the godly, learned, lawful Ministry of the word, you take no delight in the word.

3 They that delight in the word, will be at any cost to bring the word to their Congregations, they will part with thousands of gold and silver, rather than with the word; *He that esteems the Word above thousands, will be willing to part with hundreds for the Words sake.* He will account a famine of the Word more bitter than a famine of bread; by how much the soul is better than the body, by so much will he be more troubled for a soul-famine, than a bodily.

4 He that delights truly in the Law, will sincerely labour to obey it, and be much grieved when it is disobeyed.

1 He will sincerely labour to obey it, he will make the Word of God the man of his counsel, vers. 24. *Thy Testimonies are my delight*, but how doth he prove that?

that ? in the following words, *and my Counsellors* : He will make the word a *Lamp to his feet, and a light to his paths*, ver. 105. In all his undertakings, he will inquire what God would have him to do, and he will make Gods word his Compasse to sail by, and pray with *David*, ver. 35. *Make me to go in the path of thy Commandements, for therein do I delight*.

2. He will be much grieved when others transgress the Law of God. Thus *David*, vers. 53. *Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy Law*, and vers. 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes because they keep not thy Law*.

And therefore you that delight in sin, you cannot be said to delight in the word ; and you that are not pained and grieved when others sin, you are not amongst the number of those that take pleasure in Gods Law, or in whom God takes pleasure.

Use. 2. Let us make it appear that we are *Saints indeed, and in truth*, not only Saints in *Mans*, but in *Gods Kalender*, by following the example of holy *David*,

set

set down in the Text. Let us make the Law of God our joyes, and our delights. Let me speak to you in the words of the Apostle, *Col.* 3. 16. *Let the word of God dwell richly in you*, &c. not only *with you*, but *in you*. And in the Words of Christ, *John* 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for therein you hope to find eternall life.* The Greek word signifieth to search, as men do under ground for treasures, or to search as men who dive under water for some thing that is at the bottom. Let us with *Job* 23. 12. *Esteem the Word of God above our necessary food.* Let us *love it above gold, yea above fine gold*: Let it be *dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver, sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb.*

You that are Gentlemen, remember what *Hierom* reports of *Nepotianus*, a young Gentleman of *Rome*, *Qui longa & assidua meditatione scripturarum, pectus sinum fecerat bibliothecam Christi*, who by often and assiduous meditation of the Scriptures, made his breast the Library of Christ. Remember what is said of King *Alphonsus*, that he read over the Bible fourteen times, together with such Commentaries as those times afforded.

You

You that are Schollars, remember *Cranmer* and *Ridley*, the former learnt the New Teſtament by heart in his journey to *Rome*, the latter in *Pembrook-hall* Walks in *Cambridge*. Remember what is ſaid of *Thomas a Kempis*, that he found reſt no where, *niſi in angulo, cum libello*; but in a corner with this book in his hand. And what is ſaid of *Beza*, that *when he was above fourſcore years old*, he could ſay perfectly by-heart any Greek Chapter in *Pauls* Epiſtles.

You that are women, conſider what *Hierom* ſaith of *Paula*, *Euſtochiam*, and other Ladies, who were ſingularly verſed in the holy Scriptures.

Let all men conſider that hyperbolical ſpeech of *Luther*, *That he would not live in Paradiſe without the Word, and with it he could live well enough in Hell.* This ſpeech of *Luthers* muſt be underſtood, *Cum grano ſalis*.

Queſt. *May not a wicked man delight in the Word of God? Is it not ſaid of Herod*, Mark. 6. 20. *that he heard John Baptiſt gladly; and of the ſtony ground*, Luke 8. 13. *that it received the Word with joy? Is it not ſaid of*

the

the Israelites remaining wicked, that they delighted to know Gods wayes, and took delight in approaching to God, *Isa.* 58. 2. *and of the Jews*, John 5. 35. *that they were willing for a season to rejoyce in the Light, held forth by the preaching of John Baptist.*

Answ. There is a wide and vast difference between the joy and delight which a true Saint takes in Gods Word, and that which may be found in an hypocrite.

1 The delight of a godly man, is *orderly and seasonable.* It is the consequent of conviction and humiliation; For though Joy be the great work of the Spirit, yet it is not the first work. First, The Spirit by the Word convinceth and humbleth, and then comforteth; therefore Christ saith, *Mat.* 5. 4. *Blessed are those that mourn, for they shall be comforted*; and *David* saith, *Psal.* 126. 5. *They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy.* But the joy of an hypocrite is *unseasonable and disorderly.* It is his first work. It is said of the stony ground, that when *they heard the word, they received it immediately with gladness*, Mark 4. 16. It is not said, they received it first with sor-

row,

row, and then with gladness. Here is mention of joy without any antecedent humiliation. Nay, the Text saith expressly, Luke 8. 6. *It lacked moisture*, and therefore it withered away. There are many Professors in our dayes that skip from sin, to joy at first, that all in an instant are in the highest form of sin, and in the highest form of comfort, that skip out of the lap of the Devil, into the lap of joy: These are as the stony ground. These are wanton Christians; They sow before they plough; They know not the bitterness of sin, and therefore in time of temptation fall away.

2. The delight that a godly man takes in the Word, is a well-rooted delight. It is rooted in an *humble, good, and honest heart*, as is said of the good ground, Luke 8. 15. But the delight of an hypocrite is *shallow and superficial*; as his graces are slight and formal, so are his delights. Therefore it is said of the seed that fell upon the stony ground, that it had *no root*, Luke 8. 13. and *Matth.* 13. 5. *It wanted depth of earth*, and therefore when the Sun arose, it was scorched. The Apostle hints this, *Heb.* 6. 4. -and have tasted the good Word of God.

God. The delight of a wicked man in the Word, is but a *tasting, and sipping, or soaking*, a floating aloft in the River of Christs blood, no diving down to the bottome. A man may taste a thing, and not like it; taste, and *like it*, and yet not come up to the price of it; as the *young man*, Matth. 19. 22. He was very desirous to injoy eternal life, but he would not part with his possessions for the obtaining of it. A Cook tasteth of the meat he dresseth, but they onely that are invited eat of it.

Tasting doth not imply *habitual grace*. A man may taste that which he never digesteth, nor concocteth. The Israelites tasted of the first fruits of the Land of *Canaan*, and yet did not enter into *Canaan*. Such is the joy of the hypocrite. It is *outward* and *superficial*; But the delight of a true Saint is *inward, solid, and substantial*. *Jeremy* saith, that the Word of God was the *joy and rejoycing of his heart*, and that he did eat it, *Jer.* 15. 16. he did not only taste it, but eat it. And *Paul* saith, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inner man*; His delights had depth of

of earth, they were well digested and concocted.

3 It is *superlative, and over-topping.* A godly man delighteth more in God and his Word, than in any worldly thing whatsoever. *Lord lift thou up* (saith *David*, Psal. 4.6, 7.) *the light of thy countenance upon us, thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn, and their wine increased.* So also *Psal.* 43.4. ——*Unto God my exceeding joy, Psal.* 137.6. *If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.* And *Psal.* 119.72.127. The delight of a Saint in Gods word over-toppeth all his creature delights, and injoyments, and for the joy he finds in it, *he will sell all he hath to purchase it, Mat.* 13.44. But the joy of a wicked man is of an *inferiour nature*, he rejoyceth more in Corn, Wine, and Oyl, *&c.* And when it comes into competition, he will leave his spiritual and heavenly, rather than lose his creature and carnal pleasures. Thus *Herod* rejoyced in the word that *John Baptist* preached, but he rejoyced more in his *Herodias*, and when it came to the trial, he chose to behead *John Baptist*, rather than to part with *Herodias*.

The ſtony ground, when perſecution aroſe, parted with all its joy, and faith, rather than it would loſe its eſtate, or life. As a godly man *rejoyceth in worldly things, as though he rejoyced not*, 1 Cor. 7. 30. So a wicked man *rejoyceth in ſpiritual things, as though he rejoyced not*. In the Old Law thoſe Fowls that did both flye and ſwim, were unclean: A wicked man would many times *flye aloft in ſpiritual delights*, but he would alſo *bathe* himſelf, and *ſwim* in carnall pleaſures, and his heart is more affected with worldly advancement, and bodily recreations, than with heavenly, and this is a ſign that he is an *unclean Chriſtian*, and that his delights in God, and his Word are not right, becauſe they are not *over-topping and ſuperlative*.

4 It is *powerful and ſoul-ſtrengthning*, full of life, vigour, and activity; it will inable the ſoul to do and ſuffer any thing for God, it turns a *Priſon* into a *Paradiſe*, it makes *Martyrdome* to be as a *bed of Roſes*, it is *Armour of proof* to ſteel us, and make us fit to endure Afflictions, both for God, and from God; therefore *David* ſaith in the Text, *Unleſſe thy Law had been my delights*,

lights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction. His delight in the Law ſupported him from ſinking. It is like *Oyl* to the *Wheels*, like *Sails* to the *Ship*, and *wings* to the *bird*; but the delight that a wicked man hath in the Word is a *powerleſs*, *dead*, *fruitleſs*, and *ſtrengthleſs* delight: It is as a *paper Helmet*, and a *painted fire*, it will not ſupport him in the hour of adverſity: The perſons repreſented by the ſtony ground, fell away, notwithſtanding their joy, as ſoon as ever perſecution aroſe for the Goſpel. But the joy of a true Saint is *ſoul-ſupporting*, *and ſoul-upholding*. *The joy in the Lord is their ſtrength*, Nehem. 8. 10.

5 The delight that a godly man hath in the Word, is *ſin-excluding*. It cannot conſiſt with a delight in any ſin; therefore *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 119. 11. *Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.* Sin is as a *wooden window*, to ſhut out the true joyes of the Spirit. But now a wicked man, though he may delight in the Word, yet he alſo delights in ſinning *againſt the Word*. Although *Herod* heard *John Baptiſt* gladly, yet he kept his *Herodias*; and though the Iſraelites de-

lighted to *know Gods wayes*, yet they did not *delight to walk in his wayes*. They were as a *Nation* that did righteousness, he doth not say, they were such, but *quasi gens, &c.* as a Nation that did righteousnesse. And though they *delighted to approach to God*, yet they did not delight to *obey* that God before whom they approached; they took pleasure in sinning against God, as well as in serving of God, *Isa.* 58. It was not a *sin-excluding* joy, and therefore it was false and counterfeit.

6. It is *grace-increasing*. The more a Saint delights in the *Word of God*, the more careful he will be to obey the *Will of God*, and to grow and increase in the grace of God; therefore *David* saith, *Psal.* 119. 167. *My soul hath kept thy testimonies, for I love them exceedingly*. And *Psal.* 40. 8. *I delight to do thy Will, O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart*; because the Law was written in his heart, therefore he delighted to do it. He that delights to keep Gods Law, God will give him more grace to keep it, according to that remarkable Text, *Psal.* 119. 55, 56. *I have remembred thy Name, O Lord, and have kept thy Law,*

Law, this I had, because I have kept thy Precepts. What had *David* for keeping Gods Precepts? He had power to keep his Law; that is, to grow and increase in keeping of it. As the Prophet, *Hos.* 6. 3. speaks of the knowledge of God. *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord,* that is, if we industriously labour to know God, we shall have this reward, to be made able to know him more. So may I say of the grace of God. *He that delights to keep Gods Law, shall have this reward, to be inabled to keep it more perfectly.*

A true delight in Gods Word is *Grace increasing.* Grace is the *Mother* of all true joy, *Isa.* 32. 17. and joy is as the *Daughter,* and the Mother and Daughter live and dye together. True, spiritual delight, ebbs and flows as grace ebbs and flows. As the wood is to the fire, oyl to the flame, the shadow to the body, so is joy to grace. *Quantum crescis in gratia, tantum dilataris in fiducia.* But now a wicked man, though he may have a kind of delight in Gods word, yet it is not a delight of the right kind. It doth not argue that he hath true grace in him. An hypocrite is *all joy,* and *no grace;*

A *Giant* in joy, and not so much as a *Dwarf* in grace, like a green bough tyed to a dead tree. He is in the *highest form* of joy, and not so much as in the *lowest form* of grace.

7 The delight that a godly man hath in the word, is not only a delight in *spiritual things*, but a *spiritual delight*, grounded upon spiritual aims and reasons. But the delight of a wicked man, though it be in spiritual things, yet it is but a *natural delight*. As a godly man *spiritualizeth carnal things*; so an ungodly man *carnalizeth spiritual things*. *Austin* before his conversion, rejoyced much to hear *Ambrose* preach, but it was because of his eloquence (as he saith) not upon a spiritual account. A wicked man may follow a Preacher, and delight in his preaching, because of his elegant words, and Rhetorical expressions, because *he is unto him as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voyce*, &c. as it is *Ezek.* 33. 32. Or, *out of novelty*, because newly come (as the Israelites delighted in Manna at first, but afterwards loathed it) or because he *loves his person*; or out of a desire to obtain a form of knowledge in heavenly things.

The

The Phariſees delighted to do many ſpiritual things out of *vain-glory*. *Jehu* delighted to do the will of God, but it was for his own ends. *Pauci quærunt Jeſum, propter Jeſum. Stella* is of opinion, that the Devil perſwaded *Herod, to hear John Baptiſt gladly, and to reverence him, and to do many things*, that ſo he might hold him the faſter in his poſſeſſion. The Devil had him ſure by one ſin, and therefore he provoked him to do ſome good things, that ſo he might rock him aſleep in preſumption, and by his good things he might quiet his conſcience, and put a fair gloſs upon his inceſtuous practices: A man may rejoyce in ſpiritual things upon ſinful grounds and reaſons. But now a true *Saint delights* in the *word* upon a *ſpiritual account*, becauſe it is *Gods word*, and God would have him *delight in it*, becauſe it is his *guide to glory*, the way by which he is ſanctified. It is both *concha & canalis*, A *Ciſtern* to contain the glorious *myſteries* of *ſalvation*, and a *Conduit* to convey God and grace into his ſoul.

In a word, he delights in it, becauſe it is holy and pure, he can ſay with *David*, Pſal. 119. 140. *Thy word is very pure, there-*

fore thy ſervant loveth it. This no wicked man can truly ſay.

8 The delight that a godly man takes in the word, is without any *reſervation* or *diſtinction*. He delights in the *whole word of God*, in the *commanding*, and *threatning* word, as well as in the *promiſing* word; he beholds God, and his *wiſdome*, and *goodneſs* in every verſe, and therefore he can ſay with *Hezekiah*, Iſa. 39. 8. *Good is the word of the Lord.* He hath the *whole Law* written in his heart, and rejoyceth in every *tittle of it*. But a wicked man hath his *reſervations* and *diſtinctions*, he may delight in the *promiſing* word, but he undervalues the *commanding* word, and turneth a deaf ear to the *threatning* word. It is ſaid of the *Jews*, that *they rejoyced in the light of John Baptiſt*; but it is not ſaid, They *rejoyced in his heat*: He was a burning, and a ſhining Light, they rejoyced in his ſhining, but not in his burning. It is hardly poſſible for a wicked man, remaining wicked, to rejoyce in the *burning zeal*, *holineſs*, and *ſtrictneſs* of a *John Baptiſt*. But a godly man delighteth both in the *light*, and *heat* of the word.

9 It

9 It is an *abiding delight*, 2 Theſſ. 2. 18. *Everlaſting conſolation*, John 16. 22. *Your joy no man taketh from you.* It is as a *fixed Star.* But the delight of a wicked man in the Word, is as the *crackling of thorns* upon the fire, and as the Corn that grew on the ſtony ground, which quickly ſprung up, and as quickly withered, *Job* 27. 8. Therefore it is ſaid of the Jews, *John* 5. 3. They rejoyced in his light for *a ſeaſon.* In the Greek it is, πρὸς τὴν ὥραν. for an hour. A wicked mans delight in the word, is but as *a blazing Star*, which is quickly extinguiſhed. He may rejoyce in the word while he is hearing of it, but it quickly vaniſheth away. He is like to a man that comes into a pleaſant Garden, and is delighted with the ſmell of it while he is there. But a child of God makes a *Poſie of theſe Flowers*, to refreſh him when he is out. He delights to read, and to keep *the Law of God continually, for ever and ever*, Pſal. 119. 45.

Let us (I beſeech you) labour, with all labour, for this *ſuperlative, well-rooted, powerfull, ſpirituall, ſin-excluding, grace-increaſing*, and *abiding delight*, in the whole word of God.

Queſt.

Quest. *What must we do that we may be inabled thus to make the Law of God our Delights?*

Answ. 1. You must seriously study the *Excellency of Gods Word*, this made *David* prize it so much, and love it so much, *Psalm.* 19. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. The Word of God hath God for its Author, and therefore must needs be full of infinite Wisdome and Eloquence, even the Wisdome and Eloquence of God. There is not a word in it, but breaths out God, and is breathed out by God. It is (as *Irenæus* saith) κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας, an invariable rule of Faith, an unerring and infallible guide to Heaven. It contains glorious Revelations and Discoveries, no where else to be found. It hath a *manifesting*, *convincing*, *soul-humbling*, *soul-directing*, *soul-converting*, and *soul-comforting* power, and efficacy in it, as appears by these Scriptures, *Heb.* 4. 12. 1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. 1 *Kings* 21. 29. *Psalm.* 119. 105. 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. *Psalm.* 119.

119. 50. And therefore to delight in the Word, and the God that made it, is not onely our Duty, *Pſalm.* 37. 4. But it is recorded in Scripture as our Priviledge, and as the great reward that God would beſtow upon thoſe that keep holy the Sabbath-day, *Iſa.* 58. 13, 14. *Then thou ſhalt delight thy ſelfe in the Lord.* This ſhall be thy great reward.

2 You muſt fixedly ponder the neceſſity of practiſing this duty: For if you delight in *Gods Law*, God will *delight* in you. If the Law be your beloved, you are Gods beloved; If you take no *pleaſure* in his word, his ſoul will take no *pleaſure* in you.

3 You muſt pray for the grace of *Illumination.* Whenſoever you take the Bible in your hand to read in it, pray *Davids* prayer, *Pſal.* 119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* Philoſophers obſerve, that *Lumen eſt vehiculum influentiæ*, Light is the Chariot of Influence, as it begets the flower in the field, the gold in the Minerall; ſo the Foundation of all Regenera-

Regeneration, is *Illumination*. Pray that God would open your eyes that you may understand the Scriptures, as he did to his Apostles, *Luke* 24. 45. That he would take away the Vail that is upon your hearts.

4 Pray that he that made you Creatures, would make you New-Creatures, that as *new-born Babes* you may desire the sincere Milk of the word.

5 Pray that God would fulfill that excellent promise, *Jer.* 31. 33. That he would put his *Law* in your *inward parts*, and write it in your hearts, and then you cannot but heartily delight in it.

6. Pray to God to give you the same Spirit that wrote the word, to inable you to delight in it.

7 Pray for a *spiritual palate*, that you may not only delight in *spirituall things*, but have a *spirituall delight in spirituall things*. It is said of the Lioness, that when she hath once tasted of the sweetness of mans flesh, she is never satisfied till she hath more of it. He that

that hath tasted of the good Word of God, and not only tasted, but eaten it, and digested it into good nourishment, he will not onely delight in it, but he will delight in it above gold, yea above fine gold, and he will never be satisfied, till he be filled with the fulness of that God that made it.

The end of the second Sermon.

THE

THE Excellency and Uſefulneſſe OF THE WORD.

SERMON III.

PSAL. 119. 92.

Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine afflictions.

NOw I come to ſpeak of the Propoſition that is clearly held forth in the Text.

Doct. 3. *That the Word of God delighted in, is the Afflicted Saints Anti-*

Antidote againſt ruine and deſtruction. Unleſſe thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould, &c. The word of God is the ſick Saints ſalve, the dying Saints cordial; a moſt precious medicine to keep Gods people from periſhing in time of affliction: This upheld *Jacob* from ſinking, when his brother *Eſau* came furiouſly marching to deſtroy him, *Gen.* 32. 12. *And thou ſaidſt I will ſurely do thee good, &c.* The promiſe of God ſupported him. This alſo upheld *Joſhua*, and inabled him couragiouſly to fight the Lords battels, becauſe God had ſaid, *He would never leave him, nor forſake him*, Joſh. 1. 5. *Melanchon* ſaith, that the *Lantgrave* of *Heſſen* told him at *Dreſda*, that it had been impoſſible for him to have born up under the manifold miſeries of ſo long an impriſonment, *Niſi habuiſſet conſolationem ex Verbo divino in ſuo corde*, but for the comforts of the Scriptures in his heart.

There are eight things may be ſaid (amongſt many other) in commendation of the Word of God.

1 It is the *Magazin* and *Store-house* of all comfort and consolation. There is no condition (but one) that a man can be in, but he may find soul-supporting comfort for it out of the word. Indeed if thou resolvest to go on in sin, the word cannot comfort thee; it threatneth Hell and Damnation to all such. If the God of Heaven can make such miserable, they shall be miserable; But excepting this one, there is no condition so miserable, but a man may fetch a Cordial out of the word, to support him under it. Art thou as empty of riches, and as full of diseases, as *Job* under the Old Testament, and *Lazarus* under the New Testament? are the (sins with which thou art willing to part) many and great? Is thy Conscience exceedingly wounded and disquieted? Doth the Devil roar upon thee with hideous temptations? let thy condition be never so sad, the Word of God is able to afford thee comfort under it. For it is the *Word of that God*, who is the *God of all consolation*. There is no kind of true comfort, but here it is to be had, here are Cordials of all sorts. Comforts under bodily troubles, and

comforts under soul-troubles. There is no Monarch can furnish his Table with such variety of delicates, as God hath furnished his Word with variety of comforts.

2 The word of God is not only the *Magazine* of all true comfort, but the *Fountain* from whence it is derived. All the comfort that you receive by reading of good books, is fetched out of this Book. All the refreshings that the *Ambassadors of Christ* administer to you, are borrowed from this *Fountain*. As the King of *Israel* answered the woman (that cried out, saying, *Help my Lord, O King*) *If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee?* So will all the true Ministers of Christ say to any distressed soul that cryes out for comfort? How can we comfort you, if the word of God doth not comfort you? All our comforts must be fetcht from thence.

2 Kings 6. 26, 27.

3 It will comfort us at such a time, when no outward thing can comfort us. And that is, when we are under soul-agonies, and when our soul sits upon our lips; ready to depart, when we are sailing into the Ocean of Eternity; then,

then, even then, the promiſes of the VVord will comfort us: When gold and ſilver, Father and Mother, Friends, and Phyſitians are miſerable comforters, then will one Promiſe out of the VVord fill us full of joy unſpeakable, and glorious.

4 *The Comforts of the Word exceed all other Comforts, for they are pure, and purifying, ſure, and ſatisfying; they are ſoul-ſupporting, ſoul-comforting, and ſoul-raviſhing, they are durable and everlaſting.* The comforts of the world are not worthy to be named that day, in which we ſpeak of the comforts of the Word. They are not, *conſolationes*, but *conſolatiuncula*. At beſt, they are but bodily, unſatisfying, and tranſitory. Many times they are ſinful, and ſoul-damning.

5 The VVord of God is not only a *Magazine*, and a *Fountain* of comfort, but alſo a *Touchſtone*, by which we muſt try all our comforts whether they be true and real, or no. All joyes, hopes, and aſſurances, muſt be tryed by the Word, and if not rightly grounded thereupon, are falſe, and ſoul-deluſions.

6 It is an *Apothecaries ſhop*, or a *Phyſitians Diſpenſatory*, out of which we may fetch all manner of *Medicines*, to cure all the diſeaſes of our ſouls. Art thou ſpiritually lame, blind, or dumb? *&c.* The word will open blind eyes, make the dumb to ſpeak, and the lame to walk. If dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, the word, when it is the ſword of the Spirit, will quicken thee. It is as a corraſive to eat ſin out of thy heart; therefore *David* ſaith, *I have hid thy Word in mine heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.*

7 It is a *ſpiritual Armory*, out of which we may fetch all manner of weapons, to conquer the Devil, and his temptations. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. It is that little Brook, out of which every *David* may fetch *five ſmooth ſtones* to deſtroy the Devil. Theſe five ſmooth ſtones, are five Texts of Scripture, three of theſe Chriſt took out of the brook of the VVord, by which he ſubdued the Devill, *Matth.* 4. 4. 7, 10.

8 It is the *Sun of the Chriſtian World*. As the *Sun* is the *light* of the *Natural world*, and without it, the world is but a Chaos, and a Dungeon full of darkneſſe. So is

the

the *Word of God*, the light of the ſpiritual world, without which a Chriſtian is under an eternal night. Therefore *David* ſaith, *Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*, Pſal. 119.105. What would all the world avail, if no Sun to illighten it, and what comfort would all the wealth of it afford us, if no word to inſtruct, and counſel us? For this is the Chriſtians Compaſſe to ſail to Heaven by, his Staffe to walk withall to Heaven, his ſpiritual Bladders to keep his ſoul from drowning. The Cork, to keep up the net of his ſoul from ſinking. Afflictions are like the Lead of the Net, which weigheth it down, but the word, is as the Cork, which keeps it up, that it ſinks not. So ſaith *David* in the Text, *Unleſs thy Law had been my delights*, &c.

Uſe. If the VVord of God be of ſuch invaluable excellency, abſolute neceſſity, and of ſuch admirable uſe.

Uſe. 1 Let us bleſſe God exceedingly for revealing his will unto us in the word. It was a great honour, and priviledge to the *Jews*, that to them were *committed the Oracles of God*, Rom. 3. 2. And it is our great happineſſe that we have not only the ſame Oracles of God which they have, but an addition of the New Teſtament, for the clearer diſcovery of the myſteries of ſalvation unto us. If God be to be praiſed for every crum of bread we eat, much more for giving us his word, which is the *bread of life*, and the only food of our ſouls. Bleſſed be God, who hath not only given us the book of the Creatures, and the Book of Nature to know himſelf, and his will by, but alſo, and eſpecially the Book of the Scriptures, whereby we come to know thoſe things of God, and of Chriſt, which neither the Book of Nature, nor of the creatures can reveal unto us.

Let us bleſs God, not only for revealing his will in his word, but for revealing it by writing. Before the time of *Moſes*, God diſcovered his Will by immediate revelations from Heaven. But we have a ſurer word of Prophecy, 2 *Pet.*

Pet. 1. 19. ſurer (to us) than a voyce from Heaven; For the Devil (ſaith the Apoſtle) *transforms himſelf into an Angel of light*. He hath his apparitions, and revelations, he is Gods Ape, and in imitation of God, he appears to his Diſciples, and makes them beleeve that it is God that appears, and not the Devil. Thus he appeared to *Saul* in the likeneſſe of *Samuel*. And if God ſhould now at this day diſcover his way of worſhip, and his Divine will by Revelations, how eaſily would men be deceived, and miſtake Diabolical Deluſions, for Divine Revelations; and therefore let us bleſſe God for the written word, which is ſurer and ſafer (as to us) than an immediate Revelation. There are ſome that are apt to think, that if an Angel ſhould come from Heaven, and reveal Gods will to them, it would work more upon them than the written word; but I would have theſe men ſtudy the conference between *Abraham* and *Dives*, Luke 16. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. *Habent Moſen & Prophetas, &c. They have Moſes and the Prophets*, if they will not profit by them, neither would they profit by any that ſhould come out 2 Cor. 11. 14.

of Hell, or down from Heaven to them. For it is the ſame God that ſpeaks by his written word, and by a voyce from Heaven. The difference is only in the outward cloathing; and therefore if Gods ſpeaking by writing will not amend us, no more will Gods ſpeaking by a voice. *O bleſſe God exceedingly for the written Word!* Let us cleave cloſe to it, and not expect any Revelations from Heaven of new truths, but ſay with the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 1. 8, 9.

Uſe 2. *Let us prize the word of God above gold, yea above fine gold:* Let us read it, diligently, reverently, praying to God to give us the ſame ſpirit that wrote it to inable us to underſtand it, and conſcientiouſly to practice it. Let us make it the joy and rejoycing of our heart, and as it is in the Text; Let us make it our *Delights*, but of this I ſpake in the former point. The only motive I ſhall now uſe to perſwade you to make the word your *delights*, ſhall be this in the Text. Becauſe it *will keep you from periſhing in the time of your greateſt affliction.* It will comfort you when

when you have moſt need of it (that is, under heart-ſinking-afflictions, and at the hour of death) and it will comfort you when all outward comforts and creatures fail. It will be food to ſtrengthen your weak Faith; Phyſick to cure the remainders of corruptions, it will be a Cordial to revive your drooping ſpirits, and fainting ſouls. It will make you more than Conquerors over all temptations and diſtreſſes.

Queſt. But now the great Queſtion is, *How a child of God ought to manage and make uſe of the word of God, ſo as to make it a Conduit of ſupport and comfort in the day of his greateſt Afflictions?*

Anſw. To be able to do this, there is a great deal of ſpiritual wiſdom and underſtanding required. For the word to many people is like *Sauls* Armour to *David*, which was ſo cumberſome to him, that he could not wear it.

There

There are many know not how to use the word, so as to be comforted by it. As the woman of *Samaria* told Christ, *John* 4. 11. *The Well is deep, and thou hast nothing to draw with.* So may I say, The word of God is a deep Well, it is a Well of salvation, but it is deep, and the deeper the sweeter, but most people want Buckets to draw with, they want a spiritual Art to fetch out of these Wells of salvation, divine supportation, and consolation; and therefore to help you in this great work you must know,

Isa. 4.

The word of God divided into the commanding, threatning and promising Word.

That the word of God may be divided into three parts; Into *Commandements*, *Threatnings*, and *Promises*; And though a Christian must not neglect the commanding, and threatning word, yet if ever he would make the word a Channel of Divine comfort, he must study the promising word, for the Promises are a Christians *Magna Charta* for Heaven. All comfort must be built upon a Scripture promise, else it is presumption, not true comfort. The Promises are *pabulum fidei, & anima fidei*, the food of faith, and the soul of faith. As faith is the life of a Christian, so the promises are the life of

Faith

Faith: *Faith is a dead Faith*, if it hath no promiſe to quicken it; As the promiſes are of no uſe without Faith to apply them, ſo Faith is of no uſe without a Promiſe to lay hold on. And the great reaſon why the people of God walk uncomfortably in their afflictions, is, becauſe they do not chew the Promiſes; they are rare Cordials, but as a man cannot taſte the ſweetneſs of a Cordial, unleſs he chew it, no more can we receive any ſpiritual refreſhment from the Promiſes, unleſs we meditate on them. The Promiſes are as a Mine full of rich treaſure, but as Mines, unleſs we dig deep into them, we can never get the gold and ſilver hid in them: no more can we injoy the ſoul-raviſhing comfort of the Promiſes, unleſs we dig into them by a ſerious conſideration of them. They are as a garden full of rare flowers, able to ſweeten any condition. But becauſe we do not walk in this Garden, and pick out theſe flowers; hence it is that we live ſo diſconſolately and dejectedly under our afflictions. There are many rare ſtories declaring the comfort that ſome of Gods Saints have received from

the

the Promiſes in the day of their diſtreſs, Mr. *Bilney* that bleſſed Martyr was much wounded in Conſcience, by reaſon of the great ſin he committed, in ſubſcribing to the Popiſh errors, but he was much comforted by reading thoſe words, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *This is a faithfull ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, of which I am the chief.* *Beza* was ſupported under his troubles, by the words of Chriſt, *John* 10. 27, 28, 29. Mr. *Bolton* tells us of one, that was upheld under great affliction, and comforted from *Iſa.* 26. 3. Of another, from *Iſa.* 57. 15. I knew a young maid that went triumphantly to Heaven, by the refreſhing ſhe found in that well known Text, *Matth.* 11. 28. and many that have been wonderfully cheared by reading the 8 of the *Romans*, and by that Text, 1 *John* 3. 14. *We know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren.* The truth is, there is no promiſe, but if God be pleaſed to *illighten* it, and ſhew us our intereſt in it, will afford a Harveſt of joy. It is with Promiſes, as it is with Sermons: That Sermon which once heard,

did

did not at all work upon us, the ſame Sermon heard at another time may exceedingly affect us. And the ſame Text of Scripture, which ſometimes doth not at all comfort us, may at another time convey much comfort to us. Two men troubled in conſcience may both of them read the ſame Chapter, and hear the ſame Sermon, and one of them may have his troubled mind pacified, and the other continue troubled, and the reaſon is, becauſe the Spirit of God makes the Word *effectuall to one, and not to the other.* How often hath a diſtreſſed Saint, read *Mat.* 11. 28. 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *John* 10. 27, 28. *Iſa.* 26. 3. *Iſa.* 57. 15. 1 *John* 3. 14. and found no comfort in reading of them; But if the Spirit of God did come in, and open his eyes to behold the rich mercies wrapt up in theſe promiſes, and his intereſt in them, they would fill him with comfort above expreſſion. And therefore if ever you would make the word of God, Gods inſtrument to conveigh ſupport and comfort to you in the time of ſoul-ſinking Afflictions, you muſt ſtudy the promiſes, and pray unto God that his Spirit may irradiate them, and ſhew

you

you the fulness of them, and your interest in them.

Quest. *How must we improve the promises, so as to make them spiritual bladders, to keep us from being drowned in the deep waters of Affliction?*

Answ. You must do three things.

Three things to be done by those that would improve the promises.

1 You must make a *Catalogue of the Promises.*

2 You must seriously *ponder and meditate on them.*

3 You must *apply them* to your own souls, as belonging to you in particular.

1 You must make a *Catalogue of the Promises*, you must gather them up, as they lye scattered in the Word, into a *spiritual Nose-gay*, and bind them together: You must do as they that gather up ends of Gold and Silver, you must lose none. Every promise is as a Ray of Gold, as a Star in the firmament. And though there are stars of divers magnitudes, differing from one another in glory, yet every star hath its beauty and benefit: So though some Promises are more

more glorious than others, (like the Sun, in comparison of the Moon) yet every Promise hath its beauty, and lustre, and as star-light in a dark night is very comfortable; so in the dark night of affliction, every little promise will afford unspeakable comfort to a troubled soul.

To help you in making this Catalogue, give me leave to suggest three things.

1 Be sure to make it in time of health. Woe be to those that have their Promises to gather, when they should make use of them! *You that sleight the Promises in prosperity, shall receive no comfort from them in adversity.*

2 Forget not to treasure up all those Promises which God hath made to his children, in the day of their adversity. As for example, God hath promised in *all our afflictions to be with us*, Isa. 43. 2. *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee, &c.* he will be with you to protect and direct you, to support and comfort you. *If three Saints be put into the*

fiery

fiery Furnace, the Son of God will make the fourth, Dan. 3. 25.

2 God will be afflicted in all our afflictions, *Isa.* 63. 9. He ſuffers in all our ſufferings, *Acts* 9. 4.

3 He will make our *Beds in our ſickneſſes*, Pſal. 41. 3. He will condeſcend to the loweſt office for our eaſe and refreſhment.

4 He will *know our ſouls in adverſity*, Pſal. 31. 7. He will know us to pitty us, and to ſuccour, and to help us.

5 He will keep us from the evil of all afflictions, *Job* 5. 19. God hath not promiſed to keep his people from afflictions, but to keep them from the hurt of them. Though they are not good in themſelves, yet he will turn them to our good, *Heb.* 12. 10. 1 *Cor.* 11. 32. *Jer.* 24. 5. The good Figs were carried into Captivi y for their good. God hath promiſed that *all things ſhall work together for our good*, *Rom.* 8. 28. not onely all Ordinances, *&c.* but all Afflictions, *&c.*

6 God hath promiſed *to lay no more upon us, than we are able to bear*, but either to give us leſs pain, or greater patience,

1 Cor.

1 Cor. 10. 13. *And though in a little wrath he hide his face from us for a moment, yet with everlaſting kindneſs will he have mercy on us, &c.* Iſa. 54. 7, 8. Theſe, and many ſuch like Promiſes, will be as ſo many ſpiritual Cordials to revive our fainting ſpirits, and as ſo many Pillars to uphold us under the greateſt Affliction.

3. For the compleating of this *Catalogue*, you may make uſe of many excellent Books written for this purpoſe, wherein you ſhall have Promiſes of all kinds, both ſpiritual and temporal, gathered together: Yet let me adviſe you not to reſt ſatisfied with the Collections of others; but when you read the Bible, and meet with a ſuitable promiſe, with which God is pleaſed to affect your hearts, take the pains to write it down, and one ſuch promiſe of your own writing, will work more powerfully upon your ſouls, than many others of anothers gathering. So much for the firſt, *viz. Make a Catalogue of the Promiſes.*

Mr. Lee on the Promiſes. Mr. Ball, Mr. Bulkley.

The End of the third Sermon.

Mr. Lee on the Promises. Mr. Ball. Mr. Bulkley.

AN ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

Reader,

THIS and the following Sermon contains a *large Diſcourſe* about the *Promiſes*, which becauſe it may be thought by ſome to be impertinent to the Text, and rather a *Digreſſion* from it, than an explication of it; I crave leave

to informe thee of two things.

1 That the *Promiſes* are the *Principal grounds* of *Comfort* to a Childe of God, in the day of his Adverſity. They are his chief *City of Refuge*, when all *Creature-comforts* faile; when he ſuffers *Ship-wrack* of all humane props, theſe are his *Planks* upon which he ſwims ſafe to the *ſhoar of Heaven*. All *Comfort* that is not founded upon a *Promiſe*, is *Deluſion*, not *true Conſolation*. And therefore a Diſcourſe about them, cannot rationally be interpreted Eccentricall to the Text.

2 That there are diverſe particu-

ticulars added to these Sermons, concerning the *Nature*, *Necessity*, *Excellency*, and *Usefulness* of the *Promises*, which were not mentioned in the preaching of them. And if any of them shall appear to be *Heterogenial* to the Text, yet if they prove serviceable to *heighten* thy esteem of the Promises, and to *quicken* thee to a more serious and frequent *Meditation* on them, and *Application* of them. I hope thou art not at all *injured*; And I may justly desire, that thou wouldest not be *offended*.

It is reported of Saint *Austin* (in his life written by *Possidius*)

ſidius) that by a digreſſion (in one of his Sermons) from his Text, he converted an *Heretick* from his erroneous Opinions. If any paſſage in theſe two Sermons prove uſeful to turn thee from thy *ſinful Negligence*, and to *awaken* thee to a more diligent ſtudy of the precious Promiſes, I ſhall account it a *happy* and *bleſſed Digreſſion*; For herein eſpecially conſiſteth the difference between a *Religious Chriſtian*, and a *Moral Man*. A *Moral Man* will abſtain from the outward acts of ſin; But he knows not what it is to *live upon Promiſes*; He never taſted any ſweetneſſe in a Promiſe. He lives

lives upon *Creatures*, not upon *Promiſes*, and therefore when *Creatures fail*, his heart *ſinks like a ſtone*, and he is at his *Wits end*, and *Faiths end*. But a *Religious Chriſtian* lives upon *Promiſes*, and not upon *Creatures*, and therefore when *Creatures fail*, he hath the *Promiſes* to live on; He labours to taſte the ſweetneſſe that is in them. He lives upon *Promiſes*, when *Providence* ſeems to run croſſe to *Promiſes*. They are his *fiery Chariot*, to carry him up to Heaven. If then theſe enſuing Sermons, inflame thy affections with a greater love to the Promiſes, and a greater care

to *meditate* on them, and to get an *interest* in them, thou hast cause to Blesse God, and to pray for

Thy unworthy Servant

in Christ,

ED. CALAMY.

MEDI-

MEDITATE ON THE PROMISES.

SERMON IV.

PSAL. 119. 92.

Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine afflictions.

HE that would improve the *Promiſes*, ſo as to make them ſpiritual *Bladders*, to keep him from being *drowned* in the *deep waters of affliction*, muſt not only make a *Catalogue of the Promiſes*, but he muſt alſo,

2 Fixedly,

We muſt not only make a Catalogue of the Promiſes, but meditate on them.

2 Fixedly, and ſeriouſly *meditate* on them; firſt, he muſt treaſure up theſe Jewels in his heart, and then unlock them by *meditation*; firſt, he muſt make his *Noſe-gay*, and then ſmell of it. The Word of God (as I have ſaid) is as a Garden full of excellent *Promiſes*, as ſo many choice flowers. And it is our duty to walk often in this Garden, to gather up all the flowers, that lye ſcattered in it, into ſeveral Noſe-gayes, to bind them together (if I may ſo ſpeak) with the thread of Faith, and then every day to ſmell of them. The *Promiſes* are the *Saints Legacies* left them by Chriſt in his laſt *Will* and *Teſtament*. The Saints are called the *Heirs of the Promiſes*, Heb. 6. 17. And if they would be filled full of joy in the day of their diſtreſſe, they muſt be frequent in reading theſe Legacies: The Promiſes are (as it were) the *breaſts of God*, full of the *Milk of grace and comfort*. And it is our duty to be ſucking out (by meditation) the milk of grace and comfort contained in them. That which the Prophet ſaith of the Church of Chriſt, may as truly be ſaid of the Promiſes of Chriſt. *Rejoyce O ye people*

people of God, and be glad all ye that have an intereſt in the Promiſes; Rejoyce for joy, all ye that are mourners in Sion, that ye may ſuck and be ſatisfied with the breaſts of their conſolations, that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of joy and comfort contained in them. Iſa. 66.10, 11. The Promiſes are the Saints *Aqua-vitæ* (as one calls them) the Saints Cordials, the Saints Plank to ſwim to Heaven upon, the Saints Fiery Chariot, to carry them up to Heaven. And the great reaſon why they walk ſo uncomfortably, ſo diſconſolately, and ſo unbeleevingly, in the time of their tribulation, is becauſe they do not ſmell of theſe *Noſe-gayes*, they do not chew theſe Cordials, they do not read over theſe ſpiritual Legacies, they do not by ſerious meditation and conſideration, ſuck out the comfort comprehended in them. For as fire will not warm us unleſſe we tarry at it, and a *Bee* cannot ſuck out the honey that is in a flower, unleſs ſhe abide upon it; no more can any child of God receive ſupportation, and conſolation from the Promiſes in the houre of temptation, unleſs he ſeriouſly and ſolemn-

ſolemnly ponder and meditate on them.

There is a double difference between a *preſumptuous ſinner*, and a *poor, humble, diſtreſſed* Child of God.

The difference between a preſumptuous ſinner, and a true childe of God in relation to the Promiſes.

1 A *preſumptuous ſinner* ſtudieth nothing but the Promiſing Word: He ſlights the *commanding*, and the *threatning Word*. The Word commands him to keep holy the Sabbath day, not to love the world, not to luſt, but he turns a deaf ear to it. The Word threatneth to *wound the hairy ſcalp of every one that goeth on in his wickedneſſe*, but becauſe God is patient and long-ſuffering, therefore he regards it not. But as for the Promiſing word, he ſnatcheth at it, he doth not truly lay hold on it, but ſnatcheth at it, before it belongs to him, and Spider-like, ſucks the poyſon of ſin out of it, and makes of it a Cradle to rock himſelf aſleep in ſinful courſes. Becauſe God hath promiſed, *That whereſoever a ſinner turns from his ſins which he hath committed, he ſhall ſurely live, and not dye*, therefore he delayes, and prorogues his turning from ſin.

But

But now a *poor, diſtreſſed, humble Chriſtian*, fails on the contrary part; *he pores* upon the *commanding and threatning Word*, but never ponders the *promiſing Word*. God (ſaith he) commands *me to love him with all my heart and ſoul, to waſh my heart from iniquity, to love my enemies, to cut off my right hand, and to pluck out my right eye, &c.* But I cannot perform theſe commands, therefore ſurely I ſhall never be ſaved. God (ſaith he) hath threatned to *curſe every one that continueth not in every thing that is written in his Law to do it*, and therefore ſurely I am accurſed. But he never ſtudies, nor ponders the promiſing Word, for if he did, he would quickly *know three things* for his everlaſting comfort.

Three obſervable things about the Promiſes.

1 That *there is nothing required by God in his Word as our duty, but God hath either promiſed to beſtow it upon us as his gift, or the Saints have prayed to God for it as his gift.* God commands us to love him, but he hath promiſed to *circumciſe our hearts, to love him*, &c. Deut. 30. 6. God commands us to *fear him*, to *turn our ſelves* from our tranſgreſſions, and to *make our ſelves a new heart, and a new ſpirit*. But he hath

Ezek. 18. 31.
Ezek. 36. 26.
Jer. 32. 40.
Mic. 7. 19.
Rom. 6. 14.

hath promised to *give us a new heart, and a new spirit, to put his fear in our hearts, that we shall never depart from him*, and to *turn us from our evill wayes*. The Saints of God also have prayed unto God for this, as the fruit of his free mercy, *Jer.* 31. 18. *Lam.* 5. 21. There is nothing commanded in the Covenant of works, but God hath promised it in the Covenant of grace, in some measure to work it in us, for he hath promised to *work all our works in us*, and to *write his Law* (not one Commandement of it onely, but the whole Law) *in our hearts, and to put it in our inward parts*, and to *cause us to walk in his wayes*.

Isa. 26. 12.

Jer. 31. 33. Ezek. 36. 27.

2. *That God under the Covenant of grace, will for Christs sake accept of lesse than he requires in the Covenant of works.* He requires perfection of degrees, but he will accept of perfection of parts, he requires us to live without sin, but he will accept of our sincere endeavours to do it. If there be *a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12.

3. *That though he cannot in his own person performs all that God commands, yet Jesus Christ*

Christ as his Surety, and in his stead, hath fulfilled the Law for him, and that God will accept of Christs perfect, as a cover for his imperfect righteousnesse. That Christ hath redeemed him from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for him. That the Treatnings of the Law are Serpents without a sting, and that Christ hath taken away the power and force of them.

Did a *broken-hearted*, and *wounded* sinner ponder and meditate on these things, they would fill him full of joy and comfort. He would flye from the Covenant of Works, to the Covenant of Grace; from his own unrighteousnesse, unto the Righteousnesse of Christ; and from the *commanding* and *threatning word*, unto the *promising word*; he would say, Lord! Thou commandest me to walk in thy Statutes, and to keep thy Laws; This I cannot do of my self, but thou hast promised *to cause me to walk in thy wayes*, and to *write thy Law in my heart*. Lord give me power to do what thou commandest, and then command what thou wilt.

Domine da quod jubes, & jube quod vis. *Aust.*

The second difference.

2. A *presumptuous Sinner* is alwayes studying the promising Word, to bolster up himself in sin, but he never studies his *sins and iniquities, to repent for them, and from them.* He meditates on the Promises to harden his heart in sin, but not at all on his sins to humble himself for them, and to turn from them.

But now on the contrary, *A poor distressed Christian* pores upon his *iniquities and corruptions*, but never minds himself of the *Promises*, and this makes him live so dejectedly, and disconsolately. A wicked man studieth his Corruptions too little; A distressed Christian too much. If he did study the Promises, as much as he doth his corruptions; he would not walk so uncomfortably.

Wherefore if ever you would make the *Word of God a Conduit of comfort* in the day of your distresse; you must not only meditate on the *commanding* and *threatning word*, but on the *promising word*. The Commandements and threatnings must drive you to the Promises; you must not only study your corruptions to humble you, but also the Promises to comfort you. I do not say, you must not study your

your corruptions, but you muſt joyn the ſtudy of the Promiſes together with them. If *Abraham* had minded only the deadneſs of *Sarahs* womb, and of his own body, he had never beleeved, &c. but he was ſtrong in Faith, and ſtaggered not becauſe he *conſidered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, nor the deadneſſe of Sarahs womb, but was fully perſwaded, that what God had promiſed, he was able to perform.* If *Sarah* had conſidered only that ſhe was paſt age, ſhe would never have beleeved that ſhe ſhould have a Childe, but ſhe eyed the Promiſe, and *judged him faithful, who had promiſed*, and that made her beleeve. If a Saint of God looks only downwards upon the deadneſſe of his heart, and meditates only upon his ſins and infirmities; he will never be comforted in the day of his diſtreſſe. But he muſt alſo look upwards unto the Promiſes, ſeriouſly ponder, and fixedly ſtudy them; which will be as ſtrong Pillars to ſupport him, and keep him from falling into deſpair, in the hour of tribulation.

Rom. 4. 19, 20, 21.

Heb. 11. 11.

Queſt. *What are the* Meditations *which we muſt have in reference and relation to the Promiſes in the day of our diſtreſſe?*

Anſw. I will rank them into nine particulars.

The firſt meditation about the Promiſes.

1 You muſt meditate upon the three great truths already mentioned.

1 That God commands nothing as our duty, which he hath not promiſed, as his gift.

2 That God in the Covenant of Grace, will accept of leſſe than he requires in the Covenant of works.

3 That if we truly beleeve in Chriſt, God will accept of his righteouſneſſe, as a ſatisfaction for our unrighteouſneſſe.

The ſecond Meditation, and rate on the precioufneſſe of the Promiſes. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

2 You muſt meditate upon the excellency and precioufneſſe of the Promiſes, they are called τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἐπαγγέλματα, *exceeding great and precious Promiſes*; They are precious in five reſpects.

1 Becauſe they *coſt a great price*, (even the bloud of Chriſt) *to purchaſe them.*

They

They are all made to us *in Christ*, and *for Christ*; they are in him *yea*, and in him *Amen*. The Covenant (which is the Pandecta and Cabinet of all the Promises) was sealed with his bloud.

The Promises are precious in five respects. 2 Cor. 1. 20.

2 Because they *assure us of great and precious things*; they assure us of our *interest in God*, of our *justification*, *reconciliation*, *adoption*, *sanctification*, *and glorification*. Heaven it self is nothing else but the *injoyment of the Promises*, Heb. 6. 12. The Promises are Heaven folded up; Heaven is the Promise unfolded. For the Promises are nothing else but the *eternal purposes of God towards his Children made manifest*. The purposes of God are his concealed Promises; and the Promises are his revealed purposes. The Promises are the kisses of Jesus Christ, they discover his dear love; and when he discovers to us our interest in them, then he *kisses us with the kisses of his mouth, and fills us with joy unspeakable and glorious*. They are made by God, and they make over God to us, as our portion, and Christ as our Saviour, and the Spirit as our Sanctifier, and all good things, both here and hereafter as our inheritance, and therefore may well

well be called *exceeding great and precious Promiſes.*

3 Becauſe they put a price upon the New Teſtament; for wherein doth the New Teſtament exceed the Old, unleſſe it be in this, becauſe it is *founded upon better Promiſes? Heb.* 8. 6. and *bringeth in a better hope*, Heb. 7. 19.

4 Becauſe they put a *price upon all the bleſſings of God.* A little mercy reached out to us, as a fruit of a Promiſe, is more worth than a world of bleſſings comming to us meerly by way of Providence. A man may receive bleſſings from God upon a double account, either *ex largitate*, or *ex promiſſo*, either by way of Providence, or by way of Promiſe. 1 By way of Providence, *Thus God gives the earth to the Sons of men*, Pſalm. 115. 16. Thus he gave one hundred twenty and ſeven Provinces to *Ahaſhuerus*. Thus he ſets up the *baſeſt of men to rule over Nations*, Dan. 4. 17.

2 By *way of Promiſe.* Thus he gives health, wealth, and all outward comforts unto his children. For *godlineſſe hath the Promiſe of this life, and that which is to come*, 1 Tim. 4. 8. Now you muſt know that

a little bleſſing coming to us, as a fruit of the Promiſe, is more worth than a thouſand bleſſings coming to us, only by way of Providence. And therefore *David* ſaith, *A little that the righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked*, Pſalm. 37, 16. And the reaſon is,

1 Becauſe bleſſings given by vertue of a Promiſe, are ſigns of Gods ſpecial love, and come flowing to us from the ſame love with which God gives us Chriſt, they are the fruit of Covenant-love.

2 Becauſe we have them as bleſſings. A man may have a bleſſing, and yet not have it as a bleſſing. The *Iſraelites* had Quails ſent them immediately from God, which was a bleſſing in it ſelf, but was not ſent to them as a bleſſing. For while *the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them.* Pſal. 78. 30, 31. The wicked have bleſſings, but not as bleſſings, but as the Cup in *Benjamins* Sack, which proved a ſnare to him, rather than a mercy. But the godly have bleſſings as bleſſings: They have grace with them to improve them for Gods glory; they have not only the bleſſings, but a thankful heart

for them, and a fruitful heart under them, which is a certain sign that they have them as blessings.

3 Because they are pledges to them of better mercies, and beginnings of better. They are not *merces*, but *arrha*, not their *wages*, but an *earnest* of Heaven. Now a Farthing given as an Earnest of a thousand a year, is more worth than many pounds given as a reward. A wicked man hath outward blessings as his Portion, his Heaven, his All; but a Godly man that hath them by *vertue of a Promise*, hath them as a *pledge of Heaven*, and as *a beginning of eternal mercies*.

5 The Promises are precious, because they *produce great and precious effects*; They are not only excellent in themselves, but are also very powerful and operative upon all believers. The Promises (as one saith) sealed by the bloud of Christ, *ratified by the Oath of God*, testified by the *Spirit of Truth*, delivered by the *hand of mercy*, and received by the *hand of faith*, are operative words, and produce rare effects in the soul. They have

1 *A Sanctifying* } *Power.*
2 *A Comforting* }

1 *A ſoul-ſanctifying Power.* Therefore they are ſaid to make us *partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. I ſay, *of the Divine Nature*; not by the communication of the *Divine Eſſence*, but by participation of *Divine Graces*. Not in a *Familiſtical* ſenſe (as if we were Godded into God, and Chriſted into Chriſt) but in a *ſpiritual ſenſe*; we are by the Promiſes made partakers of the *Divine Nature*, that is, of the *Divine Graces*, by which we are made like to God in holineſſe. The Apoſtle tells us, that they have a power to *cleanſe us from all filthineſſe, both of fleſh and ſpirit, and to inable us to perfect holineſſe in his fear*, 2 Cor. 7. 1.

2 A *Comforting Power*. They are able to comfort us in the worſt of dayes, and dangers. O how precious is a Promiſe to a diſtreſſed Chriſtian, in the hour of extreamity! The Sun is not more comfortable to a man in a dark Dungeon, or Food to a man ready to ſtarve, or water to a man ready to dye for thirſt. The

Promiſes of God are alwayes precious, but never more precious than in times of miſery and calamity; and therefore let us in ſuch times eſpecially meditate upon the preciouſneſſe of them.

The third Meditation, meditate on the freeneſſe of the Promiſes.

3 You muſt *meditate* upon the *freeneſs* of the Promiſes. The Promiſes are the outward diſcoveries of Gods eternal love to his people. Now nothing moved God to enter into Covenant with them, and to ingage himſelfe to them by Promiſe; and thereby to become their debtor, but his free love and mercy; and therefore they are ſaid to be given us of God, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promiſes.* God promiſeth in his Word, not only to love us, but to love us freely, Hoſ. 14. 4. *I will heal their backſliding, and love them freely.* The reaſon why God makes us his people, is not from any worth in us, but only becauſe it pleaſeth him ſo to do, 1 *Sam.* 12. 22. *The Lord will not forſake his people for his great names ſake, becauſe it pleaſed the Lord to make you his people.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the great and fundamental Promiſe, the root of the other Promiſes, is freely

tendred

tendred in the Goſpel, and freely given, *John* 3.16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.* Rev. 22.17. *Whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

4 You muſt meditate on the *firmneſſe, faithfulneſſe, unchangeableneſſe,* and *immutability* of the Promiſes: they are the Promiſes of that God, who cannot deny himſelf. *Promiſſa hæc tua ſunt Domine* (ſaith *Auſtin*) *& quis falli timet, cum promittit ipſa veritas; Heaven and earth ſhall paſſe away, but one jot or tittle of the Word ſhall not paſſe.* There is no Promiſe which God hath made, though never ſo improbable, and impoſſible to fleſh and blood, but it ſhall come to paſs in due time, whatſoever he hath promiſed in *his goodneſſe*, he will perform by *his power*. *God is not a man that he ſhould lye, neither the Son of man that he ſhould repent: Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?* Numb. 23. 19. God hath promiſed that the ſame bodies that dye, ſhall riſe again at the laſt day. This is incredible to Natural reaſon. The *Stoicks* and *Epicures* derided it, when it was preached by *Paul*, Acts 17. 32. But hath God ſaid it, and ſhall he not do it? *Is the*

The fourth Meditation, meditate on the ſtability of the Promiſes.

the Lords hand shortned? Therefore Christ tells the Sadducees, *Matth.* 22. 27. *You erre, not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God.* God is *omnipotent*, and therefore able to *do above what we can ask or think*: God hath promised at the Resurrection, to make our *vile bodies like unto the glorious body of Christ*. This is impossible to natural reason; but mark what the Apostle saith, *Phil.* 3. 21. *Who shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.* God hath promised, that before the end of the World, there shall be a *National conversion of the Jews, that the Kingdomes of the world shall become the Kingdomes of our Lord and Saviour*. And that *Babylon shall fall*. These are the Promises of God, who cannot lye; *Faithfull is he, who hath said it, who also will do it*, 1 Thes. 5. 24. Though the things promised seem impossible to men, yet with God all things are possible: Therefore the Apostle proves the future conversion of the Jews by an Argument drawn from the power of God, *Rom.* 11. 23. *God is able to graft them in again*. The like is brought

Rom. 11. 25, 26.
Rev. 11. 15.
Rev. 18. 2.
Mat. 19. 26

brought to prove the ruine of Antichriſt, *Rev.* 18. 8. *Her plagues ſhall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with fire, for ſtrong is the Lord God, who judgeth her.* The Promiſes are a firm Foundation to build our Salvation upon. An Anchor, both ſure and ſtedfaſt. When *David* was taken by the Philiſtines, he was ſo ſupported by the Promiſe of God, that he did not fear what man could do againſt him; therefore he repeats it three times, *Pſ.* 56. 3. 10. *In God I will praiſe his Word, in God I will praiſe his Word; in God I will praiſe his Word,* (that is, his Word of Promiſe) I will not fear what fleſh can do unto me: the Scripture builds all the hope and comfort of a Chriſtian upon the *faithfulneſs of God,* 1 Cor. 1. 9. *God is faithful, by whom, &c.* 1 Theſ. 5. 23, 24. 1 Cor. 10. 13. *God is faithfull, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able, &c.* 2 Theſ. 3. 3. *The Lord is faithful, who ſhall ſtabliſh you, &c.* Heb. 10. 33. *For he is faithful that hath promiſed.* Memorable is that ſaying of *David,* Pſal. 138. 2. *For thou haſt magnified thy Word above all thy name:* Which words are to be underſtood (as *David Kimhi,* and our Engliſh Anno-

Annotations ſay) *Hyſteron proteron*, that is, thou haſt by thy word (that is, by performing thy Word and Promiſes) *Magnified thy name above all things*; or as *Ainſworth*, Thy word of Promiſe in Chriſt, and thy faithfulneſs in performing of it, doth more exalt thy name, than any thing by which thou art made known. O then let all the Saints of God, who are heirs of the Promiſes, meditate frequently upon the *preciouſneſs*, *freeneſs*, *firmneſs*, *unchangeableneſſe*, and *immutability* of them.

The fifth meditation, meditate on the richneſs of the Promiſes.

5 You muſt meditate upon the *fulneſs* and *richneſſe* of the Promiſes. The Promiſes are the *Saints Magazine* and *ſpiritual Treaſure*; they are called the *unſearchable Riches of Chriſt*, Epheſ. 3, 6, 7. It is one of the greateſt titles belonging to a Saint, to be ſtiled *an Heir of the Promiſes*. That man who hath a right to all the Promiſes in the Bible, is the richeſt man in the world. For *God is his* (and he that hath him that hath all things, hath all things) *Chriſt is his* (and Chriſt is all in all) the *Spirit is his* (and he who hath the Spirit, hath all good things, as appears by comparing *Mat.* 7. 11. with *Luke* 11. 13. In the firſt it is ſaid--*How much more*

Heb. 6. 17.

Qui habet habentem omnia, habet omnia.

ſhall

your Father in Heaven, give good things, &c. In the ſecond, *How much more ſhall your Heavenly Father give the holy Spirit, &c.* Grace, and Glory, and all outward good things are his. It is ſaid of the *Great Duke of Guiſe*, that (though he was poor, as to his preſent poſſeſſions) yet he was the richeſt man in *France*, in Bills, Bonds, and Obligations, becauſe he had ingaged all the Noble-men in *France* unto himſelf, by preferring of them. A true and real Chriſtian is the richeſt man in the world in Promiſes and Obligations, for he hath the Great God ingaged by promiſe to be his God, and the *God of his*. As *Charls* the firſt, commanded his *Herald* in a challenge to *Francis* the firſt, King of *France*, to proclaim him with all his titles, ſtiling him *Emperour of Germany, King of Caſtile, Arragon, Naples, Sicily*, &c. But *Francis* commanded his *Herald* to call him ſo often King of *France*, as the other had titles by all his Countries; implying, that *France* alone was more worth than all his Countries. So when a wicked man brags of his *Lordſhips*, and great poſſeſſions, when he boaſteth of his thouſands a year, a *child of God* may

ſay,

ſay, *God is mine, God is mine,* &c. I am richer than all the wicked men in the world.

The ſixth Meditation, meditate on the latitude and extenſion of the Promiſes.

6 You muſt meditate on the Latitude and extenſion of the Promiſes. The promiſes are the *Saints Catholicon*, and *Panacea*. There is no condition a child of God can be in, but he may find, not only a promiſe, but a ſuitable and ſeaſonable promiſe to comfort him in it. And herein eſpecially conſiſteth the *ſpiritual Excellency*, and *Heavenly Wiſdom* of a *Chriſtian*, not onely to ſtudy the Promiſes in generall, but to labour to find out, and having found out, to meditate upon ſuch kind of Promiſes, which are moſt ſuitable, and moſt ſeaſonable to the condition he is in. As for example.

If thou art poor in eſtate, meditate on *Pſalm.* 34. 10. *Matth.* 6. 33. *Heb.* 13. 5.

If barren, and without children, meditate on *Iſa.* 56. 5.

If perſecuted for Chriſts ſake, meditate on *Matth.* 5. 10. 1 *Pet.* 4. 12, 13, 14. *Pſal.* 94. 12.

If

If ſick, and under tormenting pains, meditate on *Pſal.* 50.15. *Iſa.* 63.9. *Rom.* 8.28.

If reproached, ſlandered, and falſely accuſed, meditate on *Mat.* 10.25. *Mat.* 5. 11, 12. *Luke* 6. 22, 23.

If Satan tempts thee, and thou art not able to reſiſt him, meditate on *Rom.* 16. 20. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *Gen.* 3. 15. 1 *John* 3. 8.

If thy corruptions be too ſtrong for thee, meditate on *Rom.* 6. 14. *Micah* 7. 19.

If God hides his face from thee, and thou ſitteſt in darkneſſe, and ſeeſt no light, meditate on *Iſa.* 50. 10. *Iſa.* 54. 7, 8.

If ready to faint in waiting upon God, and in expecting the fulfilling of his promiſes, meditate on *Iſa.* 30. 18. *Iſa.* 63.3. *Iſa.* 40.28, 29, 30. *Mal.* 3.1.

If ready to dye, and full of fears and doubts, meditate on 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56, 57. *Hoſ.* 13. 14. *Rev.* 14. 13. 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. 8.

The ſeventh Meditation, Meditate on the variety of the Promiſes.

7 You muſt meditate on the variety of the Promiſes, and their difference and diſtinction one from the other. The Promiſes

Promises are like unto the stars in the firmament.

1 For their multitude, they are very many. The Scripture is bespangled with Promises, as the Heavens are with stars. It were happy if the Saints would prove *spirituall Astronomers*, and make it their work to study the nature of these stars.

2 For their *beauty*, *excellency*, and *influence*. Every star is beautiful in its kind, and very useful and advantagious, so are the Promises. And as the stars are most comfortable in the darkness of the night, so are the promises in the night of trouble and adversity.

3 And especially for their *distinction and difference*. For one star differeth from another in glory, 1 *Cor.* 15. 41. *There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, another of the Stars*; So do the Promises differ exceedingly one from the other in beauty and excellency. Some are temporal, some spiritual, some of things that are eternal. Some are conditional, some absolute, some are Promises to those that have grace; some are Promises of grace; some are general, others particular. Some are Original, Fundamental, and Fountain-promises (as the promise of

of Jesus Christ, of God being our God, and of the Holy Ghost.) Others are *derivative, depending*, and *rivolet promises*, (as the promises of all outward comforts here, and of eternal life hereafter.) Now it is our duty to take notice of every Ray of Gold, to meditate upon all the Promises, both *spiritual, temporal*, and *eternal*, both *conditional*, and *absolute*, both of *grace*, and to *grace*, both *general*, and *particular*; but especially of the *Original* and *Fundamental Promises*, the *Fountain Promises*, from whence all others as so many streams and rivolets, are deduced and derived.

8 You must meditate on the *usefulnesse*, and *profitableneſſe* of the Promises. I have already shewed you, that they are the *Conduits of grace*, and *comfort*, that they have *a soul-sanctifying*, and a *soul-comforting-power*. Give me leave to add, That the Promises are, The eight Meditation, meditate on the usefulness of the Promises.

1 The *breathings* of Divine love and affection.
2 The *life* and *soul* of Faith.
3 The *Anchor* of Hope.
4 The *Wings* of Prayer.

5 The *Foundation* of Industry.

6 The *Rayes* and *Beams* of the Son of Righteousnesse, and upon all these accounts are very usefull and advantagious.

The Promises are the breathings of Divine love.

1 They are the *breathings of Divine love and affection.* It is an Argument of Gods wonderful love to his children, that he is pleased to enter into a Promise and Covenant to be their God, and to give them Christ, and in Christ all blessings here, and hereafter. We read *Gen.* 17. 2, 3. when God told *Abraham* that he would make a Covenant *with him, he fell on his face as astonished* at so great a mercy, and as thankfully *acknowledging* the goodnes of God towards him. The like we read of *David.* When God by *Nathan* made a promise to him, he goes into *Gods house, and prayes, Who am I, O Lord, and what is my house, that the Lord my God should do this!* &c. The Promises are the *Cabinets of the tender bowels of God,* they contain the dear and tender love of God towards his elect children, God by promising makes himself a debtor to them. Now that God who

2 Sam. 7. 18, 19.

is

is bound to none (no not to the Angels of Heaven) should enter into bonds, and bind himself to give grace and glory to his elect children, this is love above expression. And there is nothing moved God to do this (but as I have said) his free grace and mercy. For though God be now bound out of justice and faithfulness to fulfill his *Promises*, yet nothing moved him to make these promises, but his love and mercy, as *David* saith of what God had promised to him, 2 *Sam.* 7. 21. *According to thine own heart* (*ex mero motu voluntatis*) *and according to thy Word*, not for any thing in me, *For what am I, O Lord! &c.* Thus you see how the Promises are the *workings of Divine love and affection*, and upon *this account* are very useful and profitable. For *love is loves Load-stone*; therefore the Apostle saith, *We love him, because he loved us first.* The sense of Gods love to us, will kindle a love in us to God. Even as the beams of the Sun reflecting upon a Wall, heats those that walk by the Wall. So the beams of *Gods love* shining into our souls, warms our hearts with the *love of God*. *The love of God constrains*

Magnes amoris, amor. 1 John 4. 19.

us, as saith *Paul*, 2 Cor. 5. 14. There is a *compulsive and constraining power* in love. What did not *Jacob* do for the love of *Rachel*? How was *Mephibosheth* affected with the love of *David*? 2 Sam. 9. 8. It is our duty to love those that hate us, but not to love those that love us, is more than *heathenish* and *brutish*.

The Promises are the life and soul of Faith.

2 They are *the life and soul of Faith*. Faith without a *Promise* to act upon, is as a body without a soul, as a *dead flower* which hath no *beauty* or *sweetnesse in it*; But Faith grounded upon the Promises, will inable a Christian to advance in all manner of holiness: What made *Abraham forsake his Countrey, and his Fathers house, and go he knew not whither*? Nothing moved him to this, but because God had promised to make him a great Nation, and he believed it. Of all graces, none so causal of holinesse as the grace of Faith: It is a *world over-coming, heart-purifying, life-sanctifying, wonder-working grace*, and therefore the Promises must needs be very useful, because they are the life and soul of Faith.

The Promises are

3 They are the *Anchor of Hope*, Hope is called an *Anchor of the soul, both sure, and stedfast*.

ſtedfaſt. But the *Promiſes* are the *Anchor* of Hope. All Hope of Heaven, which is not founded upon a *Promiſe*, is *Preſumption*, and not *Hope*. *Preſumption* is when a man hopes to go to Heaven upon no ground, or upon an inſufficient ground. But *true Hope* is a *Hope grounded* upon a *Scripture-Promiſe*: And Hope bottomed upon *Divine Promiſes*, will mightily avail unto purity and holineſs. *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* lived as *pilgrims* and *ſtrangers upon earth, becauſe they looked and hoped for a City which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God*. The Old Teſtament Saints would not *accept deliverance upon ſinfull terms, becauſe they hoped for a better Reſurrection*. The Papiſts and Arminians are much miſtaken in teaching, That the *aſſurance of ſalvation is an enemy to godlineſſe*. The Scripture ſaith the quite contrary, 1 *John* 3. 3. *He that hath this Hope, purifyeth himſelf, even as he is pure*. The true *Hope of Heaven, will make us live heavenly*.

the anchor of Hope. Heb. 6.

Heb. 11. 10. Heb. 11.

4 They are the *Wings of Prayer*: Prayer is a Divine *Cordial* to convey grace from Heaven into our ſouls. It is a *Key* to unlock the bowels of mercy, which

The Promiſes are the wings of Prayer

are in God. The best way to obtain *Holiness*, is upon our Knees; the best posture to fight against the Devil, is upon our Knees, and therefore Prayer is not put as a part of our *spiritual Armour*, but added as that which must be an ingredient in every part, and which will make every part effectual. But now the Promises are the *Wings of Prayer*. Prayer without a promise, is as a *Bird without Wings*: And therefore we read both of *Jacob* and *Jehoshaphat*, how they urged God in their prayers with his Promises. And certainly the *Prayers of the Saints winged with divine promises*, will quickly flye up to Heaven, and draw down grace and comfort into their souls. And upon this account it is, that the Promises are so useful to a Christian, because they are so helpful in prayer. When we pray, we must urge God with his Promises, and say, Lord, Hast thou not said, *Thou wilt circumcise our hearts to love thee, thou wilt subdue our sins, thou wilt give the Spirit to those that ask it*? Lord! Thou art faithfull, fulfill these thine own promises: And we must remember this great Truth, *That the Promises God makes*

Chron. 8, 9.

to

to us, to mortifie our ſins for us, are greater helps againſt ſin, than our promiſes to God to mortifie ſin. Many men in the day of their diſtreſs vow and promiſe to leave ſin, and fight againſt it in the ſtrength of theſe promiſes, and inſtead of *conquering* ſin, are *conquered* by ſin. But if we fight againſt ſin in the ſtrength of Chriſt, and of his promiſes; if we urge God in prayer with his own Word, we ſhall at laſt get victory over it. For he hath ſaid, *That ſin ſhall not have dominion over us*, Rom. 6. 14.

5 They are the *foundation of Induſtry*. The promiſes do not make men *lazie and idle*, as ſome ſcandalouſly ſay, but they are the ground of all *true labour and induſtry*, therefore the Apoſtles perſwade us from the conſideration of the Promiſes, unto the ſtudy of ſoul-purification, to have our converſation without covetouſneſs; *to flee from Idolatry, and to ſeparate our ſelves from ſinfull communion.* Divine promiſes are great incouragements unto ſpirituall diligence.

The Promiſes are the foundation of induſtry.

2 Cor. 7. 1. Heb. 13. 5. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 4. 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18.

Object. *Though* conditional *Promiſes be the foundation of induſtry* (*becauſe we cannot have the thing promiſed, unleſſe we perform the conditions*) *yet* abſolute *Promiſes* (ſay ſome) *are foundations of laſineſs, and therefore they affirm there are no* abſolute Promiſes *in Scripture.*

Anſw. Abſolute promiſes are made foundations of induſtry in Scripture, as well as *Conditional*: The Apoſtle exhorts us to *work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling, becauſe it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do, of his own good pleaſure.* And the reaſon is, becauſe God performeth nothing which he promiſeth, though never ſo abſolutely, but in the *diligent and conſcientious uſe of the means on our part.* God promiſeth *Ezek.* 36. 26. *to give us a new heart, and a new ſpirit, &c.* but then he adds, verſ. 37. *I will yet for this, be inquired of by the houſe of Iſrael.*

Phil. 2. 12, 13.

The Promiſes are the raies and beams of the Son of righteouſneſs.

6 They are the *rayes and beams* (as one ſaith) *of Chriſt the Son of Righteouſneſſe*, in whom they are founded and eſtabliſhed. As all the Lines in a Circumference, though

though never ſo diſtant, carry a man to one and the ſame *Center*. So all the *Promiſes carry* us to *Chriſt the Center*. For the *Promiſes* are not made for any thing in us, nor have they any ſtability from us, but they are made in, and for Chriſt unto us, unto Chriſt in our behalf, and unto us ſo far as we are members of Chriſt. Now Jeſus Chriſt is the ground of all ſoul-purification, ſoul-conſolation, and ſoul-ſalvation; And therefore I may ſafely conclude, that the promiſes are moſt ſingularly uſeful and advantagious. And that it is the duty of all thoſe that deſire to live holily and comfortably, to conſider and ponder the profitableneſs and beneficialneſs of the Promiſes.

Dr. Reynolds on the ſinfulneſs of ſin.

9 And laſtly, you muſt meditate on the *great neceſſity that lyeth upon all men to get a Scripture-intereſt in the Promiſes*. This I adde to awaken Chriſtians to attend diligently to this Diſcourſe about the Promiſes; and to ſhew them the neceſſity of minding and of ſtudying them. For he that hath no right to them is in a *faithleſs, hopeleſs, comfortleſſe, deſperate*, and *damnable condition*. All the happineſs

The ninth Meditation, meditate on the neceſſity of getting an intereſt in the Promiſes.

damnable cond.

of

of a Christian both here and hereafter consisteth especially in his right and title to the promises. The Scripture tells us in expres words, that he that is a
Eph. 2. 12. *stranger from the Promise, is without Christ, without God, without hope.* Sad is the condition of that man, who hath no interest in God, nor in Christ, and who is without hope. And such is the condition of him who is a stranger to the Promises; for all hope of Heaven, which is not *bottomed* upon a *promise*, is *presumption*, and *soul-delusion*. All comfort and joy which is not grounded upon a Promise, is *soul-cousenage*; and all Faith not anchored upon a promise, is nothing else but *flattery*, and *soul-mockery*. Consider this you that are full of joy and comfort, and (as you say) relye upon Christ for salvation; Tell me, what promise have you to build this Faith, this hope, this comfort upon? For there are thousands that flatter themselves into Hell by a false hope of *Heaven*; thousands which promise to themselves to go to Heaven, but have no *promise* for it *from God*. Such were the *five foolish Virgins*; such was the Church of *Laodicea*, such were

were they, *Matth.*7.24.*Hos.*8.2,3. *Micha* 3, 10, 11. Remember this, and let it be daily in your thoughts: you that have not true right to the Promises, your *Faith* is *faction*, your *Hope* is *presumption*, and your *joy* is delusion. To be a *stranger from the Promise*, is to be *without God*, *without Christ*, and *without Hope*. So much for the second particular, viz. *Meditate on the Promises*.

The end of the fourth Sermon.

RULES

RULES FOR THE Right Application OF THE PROMISES.

SERMON V.

PSAL. 119. 92.

Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine afflictions.

NOw I come to the third and laſt particular. He that would make the *Promiſes* as ſpiritual bladders to keep him from drowning in the deep waters of affliction,

on, must not only make a *Catalogue* of them, and *meditate* upon them, but he must make *Application* of them to his own soul, as belonging to him in particular. He must (as it is said of the godly Patriarchs, *Hebrews* 11. 13.) *be perswaded of them, and imbrace them*; he must hugge and kisse them as his *rich portion*, and *glorious inheritance*. And this is the chief of all: For no man can receive any comfort from a Promise, who is not able to make out his interest in that Promise. As the life of a Sermon is in the Application of it unto our selves, so the life of a *Promise* is in the appropriation of it. *Quid est Deus, si non est meus?* What am I the better (saith *Origen*) that Christ took upon him the *flesh of a Virgin*, if he took not *my flesh*? What was the great Prince the better for the miraculous plenty in *Samaria*, when the Prophet told him that he should *see it with his eyes, but not eat of it*? As the man, who when he was ready to be drowned, saw a Rain-bow (which was a sign that the World should never be again drowned) said, *Quid mihi proderit hoc Iris, si ego peream*; *what am I the better for thy*

Rain-

bow, if I periſh? So may I ſay, what is a man the better for the rich Mine of treaſure contained in the Promiſes, if he hath no ſhare in it.

There are three ſorts of Profeſſors of Religion.

1 Some lay claim to the *Promiſes* when they have no right to them; ſuch are your *preſumptuous ſinners*, who take it for granted, that the promiſes belong to them, who preſume themſelves into Hell by a falſe hope in the promiſes, who make a *Feather-bed* of the promiſes, upon which they ſleep ſecurely in ſin: As *Thraſilaus* (a *mad Athenian*) laid claim to every ſhip that came to *Athens*, though he had right to none: So a preſumptuous ſinner layes claim to every promiſe, though he have right to none; he inlargeth them beyond their bounds, and maketh the conditional promiſes to be abſolute, and ſuch as belong only to theſe that are in Chriſt, to belong to him, though he be not in Chriſt. He ſucks the *poiſon* of ſin, and ſecurity, out of the *ſweet* Flower of the *Promiſes*.

2 Some

2 Some have an intereſt in the *Promiſes*, and know their intereſt. Theſe live in Heaven while they are upon earth, theſe *rejoyce in tribulation*, and are *more than Conquerours* over the greateſt afflictions. Theſe are ſecure from periſhing in the day of diſtreſſe. That man, who taking the Bible into his hand, can ſay upon right grounds, *All the Promiſes in this Book are my portion*, and I have a right and title to them, this man is *happy above expreſſion*.

3 Some have an intereſt in the *Promiſes*, but do not know their intereſt, and therefore dare not (in the hour of trouble) apply them for their *ſupportation and conſolation*. Such are your *broken-hearted, wounded, diſtreſſed*, and *deſerted Chriſtians*. Such can receive no comfort from the promiſes in the day of affliction. When they begin to apply them for their ſupport, the Devil ſuggeſteth to them, and their own doubting hearts tell them, that they miſ-apply them, and that they belong not to them. When a godly Miniſter (whoſe office is to *ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to thoſe that are weary*, Iſa. 50.4.) indeavours by the Application of the promi-

promiſes to comfort them, their *ſouls refuſed to be comforted*, they exclude themſelves from having a right to Chriſt, and his *Promiſes*, though Chriſt would not have them excluded. They groundleſly fear that their names are written in the *black Book of Reprobation*, and that all the curſes of the Law are their portion; hence it is that they live ſo uncomfortably, and diſconſolately in the time of affliction. Now then for the help of ſuch perſons, who have a true title to the promiſes, but know it not, who *walk in darkneſſe, and ſee no light*, who beleeve they are Hypocrites, when they are not, and that they are not in Chriſt, when they are; (that I may be Gods inſtrument to inable ſuch to make Application of the precious promiſes unto their own ſouls in particular, in the hour of trouble, for their everlaſting ſupportation and conſolation) I ſhall lay down theſe enſuing Rules, and Directions.

Rule 1.

The first Rule for the right Application of the Promises.

1 Whosoever in a Gospel-sense doth obey the *commanding word of God*, hath a real interest in the *Promising Word of God*: Though thou canst not perfectly obey the will of God; yet if thou dost *truly desire*, and *industriously indeavour* to obey it in all things. If God hath written his Law in thy heart, and given thee a Gospel-frame, inclining thee to the obedience of all his Commandements sincerely, though not perfectly; this is an infallible evidence, that thou hast a right and portion in all the Promises. This is that which God saith, *Exod.* 19. 5: *If you will obey my voice indeed, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure, &c.* If ye will obey my voice indeed, not only in word, and in shew, but indeed, and in truth. Thus *Jerem.* 7. 5, 7. *If ye thorowly amend your ways, if ye thorowly execute judgement, &c. then will I cause you to dwell in this place, &c.* If ye thorowly amend, &c. not only in some things, but in all things; not only outwardly, but inwardly also. This Rule is expresly delivered by the Apostle,

ſtle, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Godlineſſe hath the promiſe of the life that now is, and that which is to come.* If thou beeſt a godly man in a Goſpel-ſenſe, that is, one who truly and ſincerely indeavoureth to be godly. If thou makeſt Gods Will, thy *Rule to live by*, and not thine own. *Gods glory* thy end, and not thy own carnal intereſt. *Gods love* thy *Principle*. If thy *Rules*, *Aims*, and *Principles* be Godly, all the Promiſes of this Life, and of the Life to come, belong to thee. It is worth obſerving: that all the Promiſes of Life and Salvation are *conditional*. *Happineſſe* is entailed upon *Holineſſe*, *Glory* upon *Grace*. You ſhall read in Scripture of the *bleſſings* of the *Covenant*, and of the *bond* of the *Covenant*, of the *bleſſings* of the *Promiſes*, and of the *condition* of the *Promiſes*. If ever you would aſſure your ſelves of your intereſt in the *bleſſings of the Covenant*, you muſt try your ſelves by your ſincere performance of the *condition*. Thus Chriſt is promiſed to none but ſuch as beleeve; pardon of ſin, to none but ſuch as repent; and Heaven to none but ſuch as perſevere in well doing. Tell me then, Canſt thou ſay as in Gods preſence, that

Ezek. 20. 37.

thou haſt reſpect to all Gods Commandements (though thou faileſt in all, yet thou haſt reſpect to all) that thou obeyeſt God *in deed*, and *in truth*, and that thou ſincerely laboureſt to be godly? This is a certain ſign, that all the *Promiſes are thy portion*; but you that are ungodly, and do not thorowly amend your wayes, you that ſlight, undervalue, and deſpiſe the *commanding Word*, you have no part, no portion in the *promiſing word*.

But it may be a diſtreſſed Chriſtian (though without juſt cauſe) will ſay that he is afraid that he doth not ſincerely obey the *commanding word*, and therefore dares not apply to himſelf the *promiſing word*, wherefore I adde

Rule 2.

The ſecond Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

2 *The more thou art afraid, leſt thou ſhouldeſt have no right to the Promiſes, the more right thou haſt (in all probability) to them.* This I ſpeak only to the diſtreſſed Chriſtian; not that I commend his fear: But this I ſay, This fear which thou art poſſeſſed withall, is a probable

ſign

ſign that thou haſt an intereſt in the Promiſes. For a *preſumptuous ſinner* never doubts of his right to them, but takes it as a Maxim not to be denied, that they belong to him. It is a comfortable ſaying of Mr. *Greenhams*, *When thou hearest the Promiſes, and art in a cold ſweat, and haſt a fear and trembling ſeizing upon thee; leſt they ſhould not belong to thee, doubt not, but that they do belong to thee*; For Chriſt hath ſaid; *Come unto me all ye that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* Mat. 11. 28. And the Prophet *Iſaiah* calls upon thoſe who are of a fearful heart, *to be ſtrong, and fear not*, Iſa. 35. 4. and tells us for our comfort, that God will look with an eye of favour *upon him that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at his Word.* Iſa. 66. 2.

Rule 3.

3 *The more ſenſible thou art of thine own unworthineſs to lay hold upon the Promiſes, the more thou art fitted and qualified to lay hold upon them.* The third Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes. For the promiſes are (as I have ſhewed) the fruit of *Free-grace*. Nothing moved God to enter into a Covenant with his people, and thereby to *become*

Sola misericordia reducit Deum ad homines, & sola misericordia reducit homines ad Deum.

come their Debtor, but his free love. Free grace brought Christ down from Heaven, and it is Free Grace must carry us up to Heaven, Christ himself is called, *the gift of God*, John 4. 10. *Moses* tells the Israelites, *Deut.* 7. 7, 8. *The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor chuse you, because you were more in number than any people, &c. but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the Oath which he had sworn unto your Fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you, &c.* God doth not love us, because we are *worthy of his love*, but because he loves us, therefore he *makes us worthy*. We must not *bring worthinesse to Christ*, but *fetch worthinesse from Christ*. And therefore, if thou beest sensible of thine own nothingness, emptiness, and unworthiness, lay hold upon that excellent Promise, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Blessed are those who are sensible of their spiritual wants, for to them belongs the Kingdome of Heaven, as certainly as if they were already in it.

Mat. 5. 3.

Rule

Rule 4.

4 Study thy intereſt in the *main and fundamental Promiſe*, and that will help thee to make out thy intereſt in all the other; *The main and fundamental Promiſe*, is the *Promiſe of Chriſt*. For all Promiſes, whither Spiritual or Temporal, are made to us, in and through him. God hath promiſed, *never to leave us, nor forſake us*, and that *all things ſhall work together for our good*; that is, if we be in Chriſt, God hath ſaid, *all things are ours, whether Paul, or Apollos, whether life or death, whether things preſent, or things to come*; but it is with this Promiſe, if *we be Chriſts*: Whoſoever takes any comfort from any Temporal promiſe, and is not in Chriſt, doth but delude and cheat himſelf. This then is thy work; O Chriſtian! ſtudy thy intereſt in Chriſt, make out that, and make out all. If no intereſt in *Chriſt*, no intereſt in the *Promiſes*; If an intereſt in *Chriſt*, an intereſt in the *Promiſes*; let this then be thy daily buſineſs to make it out to thy ſoul, that *Chriſt* is thine.

The fourth Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

2 Cor. 1. 20.

1 Cor. 3. 2.

Three things to be ſtudied in order to the making out of our intereſt in Chriſt.

Queſt. *How ſhall I be able to do this?*

Anſw. For this purpoſe you muſt diligently ſtudy three things.

1 The *Univerſality* of the Promiſe of Chriſt.

2 The *Freeneſſe* of it.

3 The *condition* upon which he is tendred.

Firſt, the univerſality of the Promiſe of Chriſt. Mark 16. 15, 16.

1 The *Univerſality of the promiſe of Chriſt*. Chriſt Jeſus with all his benefits is promiſed to every one who is willing to lay hold on him, as he is tendred in the Goſpel. The Apoſtles are commanded to go into *all the world, and to preach the Goſpel to every creature; he that beleeveth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved, &c.* If thou haſt a heart to believe, be thy ſins never ſo great, it is for the honour of Jeſus Chriſt to pardon them. As the Sea covers great Rocks, as well as ſmall, ſo the Mercy of God in Chriſt will pardon great ſins, as well as little. It will coſt Chriſt as little to waſh away the guilt of great ſins, as of ſmall. Chriſt is a great *Phyſitian*. And *David* prayeth, *Pardon my iniquity, for it is great*, Pſalm 25. 11.

Magnus de cælo venit medicus; quia magnus in terra jacebat ægrotus. *Aug.*

Though

Though thy ſins be never ſo bloodily circumſtantiated, though never ſo often reiterated, though thou beeſt never ſo loathſome, yet if thou canſt beleeve; *There is a Fountain opened to the houſe of David, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, for ſin, and for uncleanneſſe*; and therefore let no man exclude himſelf from a right to Chriſt, who is willing to take Chriſt upon Chriſts terms. He that excludes himſelf, offers the greateſt injury imaginable.

Firſt, Unto Jeſus Chriſt, for he makes him a lyar; Chriſt hath ſaid, *If any man come to me, I will in no wiſe caſt him out*; John 6.37. and he ſaith, Chriſt will caſt me out, although I do come to him.

Secondly, Unto his own ſoul. For he neceſſitates himſelf unto damnation; For Chriſt hath ſaid expreſly, *He that beleeveth not ſhall be damned.*

Object. *But I am afraid that I am a* Reprobate, *and that God hath excluded me from having any intereſt in* Chriſt.

Anſw.

Answ. Who told thee so? It is one great sign thou art not, because the Devil would perswade thee that thou art. But howsoever, *Secret things belong to God, but those things which are revealed to us, and our children.* God hath *kept the black Book of Reprobation secret.* He openeth the *whole Book of Election* to some of his children, but he keeps his *black Book* unrevealed. It is a sin for any man to think himself a Reprobate (unless he can prove that he hath sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost) for this thought would hinder him from the use of means for his salvation, and cause him to despair, which is a sin of the first magnitude; and therefore take heed of complementing thy self into Hell by a sinfull Modesty, in refusing to beleeve in Christ: Take heed of dallying or delaying in the great work of *laying hold upon Christ upon Christs terms.* Remember, God excludes none from Christ, but such as exclude themselves by unbelief. And remember,

Joh. 3. 36. *Whosoever beleeveth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

2 You

2 You muſt ſtudy the *Freeneſs* of the Promiſe of Chriſt. God promiſeth Jeſus Chriſt freely, *Ho every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; Come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come buy Wine and Milke without money, and without price, &c.* Chriſt is offered in the Goſpel, *ſine pretio, ſine merito, ſine motivo*, without price, without merit, and without any motive inducing on our parts. Therefore the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *Whoſoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* Let not then thy undeſervedneſs hinder thee from laying hold upon Chriſt, as thy portion. Say not, I am not worthy that Chriſt ſhould own me. Chriſt will own thee, not becauſe thou art *worthy*, but *becauſe he delights in mercy*, Micah 7. 18. Say not, I am not humbled enough, and therefore I dare not lay hold upon Chriſt. For humiliation is not required to make us precious to Chriſt, but to make Chriſt precious to us, and if thou beeſt ſo far humbled, as to be willing to take Chriſt upon Chriſts terms, thou art *humbled enough, unto Divine acceptation*, though not unto *Divine ſatisfaction*. Every ſtung *Iſraelite*, who was inabled to

Study the freeneſs of the Promiſe of Chriſt. Iſa. 55. 1.

Rev. 22. 17.

to look up to the *brazen Serpent*, was healed, though he was not ſtung to that proportion that another *Iſraelite* was.

Study the condition upon which Chriſt is promiſed.

3 You muſt ſtudy the condition upon which Chriſt is promiſed. It is certain Chriſt is not tendered abſolutely without any condition. Chriſt is not offered to a proud ſinner, reſolving ſo to continue, or to a Drunkard, reſolving to perſevere in his drunkenneſs. Thoſe Texts which declare the *Freeneſs* of the offer of Chriſt, do alſo mention a condition to be performed by thoſe that will have him, *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 22. 15. In both places the condition of thirſting is expreſſed. Let him *that is a thirſt come. He every one that thirſteth.*

Queſt. *Doth not the mentioning of a* condition *take away the freeneſs of the tender of Chriſt?*

Anſw. By no means. The reaſon is, becauſe this very condition is the free gift of God. The Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* 4. 16. *Therefore it is of Faith, that it might be by grace.* The condition of Faith doth not

not make the offer of Chriſt, not to be of grace, but therefore it is of faith; that it might be of grace, for as Chriſt, ſo alſo Faith *is the gift of God*. We do not preach conditions unto juſtification in a *Popiſh* ſenſe (as if they merited out of congruity the pardon of ſin) or in an *Arminian* ſenſe (as if we could do any thing by our free-will (without grace) to diſpoſe our ſelves unto juſtification) but in a *Scripture* ſenſe, we ſay, That all thoſe on whom God intends to beſtow Chriſt freely, he freely openeth their eyes to ſee their undone condition out of Chriſt, he humbles them under the ſenſe of their ſad condition, and out of his free mercy inables them by faith to lay hold upon Chriſt, and to accept of him upon his own terms; Faith is not the *cauſe for which*, but the *cauſe without which*, God will not give us Chriſt.

Queſt. *But what is the condition upon which Chriſt is promiſed?*

Anſw. There is (if I may ſo ſpeak) *Conditio præparans, & diſponens*, and *conditio applicans*, the condition required to the pre-

preparing and disposing us for an interest in Christ, and the *condition applying Christ to us, and bringing him into our possession.*

1 The condition required to the *disposing, preparing, and fitting us for an interest in Christ.* And this is the sight of our sins, the sense of them, and a real willingnesse to part with them. There is no man qualified according to the Gospel, to rest upon Christ for pardon of his sins, who is not really willing to part with them. And no man will be willing to part with his sins (which he naturally loves as himself) unless he see the sinfulness and cursednesse of them, and feels in some measure the smart of them. The woman who had the bloody issue, never thought of coming to Christ, till all her money was spent in vain among other Physitians. The Prodigal child would never have returned to his Father, had he not seen himself utterly undone by wandring from him.

2 The *condition applying Christ to us, and bringing him into our possession.* This is Faith, which therefore is the proper condition of the Gospel, upon which Christ is tendred. Now this Faith is not a bare receiving,

ving, and taking of Chriſt. For there are many who take him, and miſtake him. (There is no man but is willing when he is dying, to take Chriſt, as the men of the old world were willing to go into the Ark when the Flood came) but this taking and receiving of Chriſt (if it be right) hath ſix Properties.

Right receiving of Chriſt hath ſix Properties.

1 It is a *receiving of Chriſt* with all his appurtenances; Chriſt and diſgrace, and reproach, and poverty. Chriſt and his Croſſe: There are many would be glad of Chriſt, but they will not take up his Croſs. They would take Chriſt down from the Croſs (as *Joſeph of Arimathea* did) *and leave the Croſs behind them*. But he that takes Chriſt aright, will be as willing to wear a Crown of Thorns, for his ſake, as a Crown of Gold.

2 It is a *receiving of Chriſt* in all his Offices, as our *King*, *Prieſt*, and *Prophet*. A true Believer is as willing to receive Chriſt into his ſoul, as he is that Chriſt ſhould receive him into Heaven, he is as willing to have Chriſt reign over him, as he is to reign with Chriſt in Heaven. He deſires not only to be *ſaved*, but to be *healed* by *Chriſt*.

3 It

3 It is a receiving of *Christ into every room* of the ſoul; for Chriſt will come into *every room*, or into *never a room*. A true Believer opens every doot unto Chriſt, he gives him the Lock and Key of the whole man, and deſires that he would come and reſide in *every room*.

4 It is a *receiving of Chriſt*, and *him* only. For Chriſt muſt rule *alone*, or *not at all*. An Hypocrite would compound with Chriſt, and together with the falſe Mother, divide the child, but a true beleever ſaith with the Prophet, *O Lord our God! Other Lords beſides thee have had dominion over us; but now by thee only will we make mention of thy Name.* And with the true Mother he will give the whole to God.

Iſa. 26. 13.

5 It is a *receiving of Chriſt in health*, as well as in *ſickneſs*; in *proſperity*, as well as in *adverſity*; in *youth*, as well as in *old age*; in *life*, as well as in *death*. Moſt people make uſe of Chriſt, meerly as a ſhelter againſt a ſtorm for their own ends (as the *Athenians* did of *Themiſtocles*) and when the ſtorm is over, forſake him. Moſt people flye to Chriſt in their diſtreſſe, as *Joab* did to the *horns of the Altar*, and

and when they can ſerve the Devil no longer, then they begin to think of ſerving of God; but a true Believer will give his beſt dayes to God, as well as his worſt, he deſires not only to dye in Chriſt, but to live for Chriſt, he receives Chriſt in health, *&c.*

6 It is a receiving of Chriſt, not only for an hour, or a day, or a year, but for ever. True Faith marries the ſoul to Chriſt, never to part. Once a member of Chriſt, for ever a member.

Now there is no child of God of what ſize ſoever (though he be but as a Toe in Chriſts body) who cannot truly ſay, that he is willing to receive Jeſus Chriſt with all theſe Properties, to receive all Chriſt, with all his appurtenances, and to receive him only in *every room*, in *health*, and for *ever*. And therefore let not the Devil, or thy miſ-giving heart, or thy melancholick-phancy, keep thee off from beleeving that Chriſt Jeſus is thy portion, and that thou haſt an intereſt in the *main* and *fundamental Promiſe*, and by that, in all the other. Do to Chriſt, as the *Shunamitiſe* woman did to the Prophet, *lay faſt holdon him*; and ſuffer not the Devil to cauſe

maine

2 Kings 4. 27.

cauſe thee to let go thy hold. Oh that there might be this day a bleſſed and happy Marriage between Jeſus Chriſt; and every diſtreſſed Chriſtian.

Object. *But ſuppoſe I am willing to take* Chriſt *upon* Chriſts terms, *can I reſt aſſured that* Chriſt *will receive me?*

Joh. 6. 37. *Anſw.* Yes doubtleſs. For he hath ſaid, he will; and he is truth it ſelf, and cannot lye. Indeed a poor wounded ſinner will ſometimes confeſs that he is willing with all his heart to receive Chriſt upon his own terms; but he is afraid leſt Chriſt ſhould refuſe to receive him. But this is a needleſs fear: For Chriſt will in no wiſe refuſe thoſe that come to him. *To as many as receive him, to all thoſe he will give power to become the Sons of God, even to them that beleeve in his Name. He that beleeveth hath everlaſting life, and ſhall never come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death to life.* So much for the fourth Rule.

Iſa. 55. 1. Rev. 22. 15.

Joh. 1. 12.

Joh. 5. 24.

If theſe Rules and Directions already named, will not inable thee to apply the Promiſes, ſo as to keep thee from periſhing

riſhing in the day of diſtreſſe: Let me adde,

Rule 5.

5 *If thou canſt not lay hold upon the Promiſes made to thoſe, who are in the higheſt form in Chriſts School, lay hold upon the Promiſes made to thoſe who are in the lower forms.* The fifth Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

In Chriſts School there are divers ſorts of Scholars, ſome are in the high form, ſome in the middle, ſome in the loweſt, ſome are Babes in Chriſts School, ſome are grown Chriſtians, ſome are as tall Cedars, ſome are as low ſhrubs. Now you muſt know that it is our duty to labour to be of the higheſt form. He that ſaith he hath *grace enough*, hath *grace little enough*. He that ſtints himſelf in his indeavours after grace, never had true grace. We muſt labour to be *perfect, as God is perfect*. But yet you muſt alſo know, that he that is a *real Scholar* in *Chriſts School*, is in an happy condition, though he be not the *beſt Scholar*. And that it is our duty ſo to eye the *eminent graces*, which are in others, as to be thereby incited to a *further progreſſe* in grace,

Qui dixit ſufficit, deficit.

Non progredi, eſt regredi.

but not ſo as to be thereby *diſheartned* and *diſcouraged*. There are many *diſtreſſed Chriſtians* like to thoſe who gaze ſo long upon the *brightneſſe of the Sun*, that when they come into their houſes, they cannot ſee at all, they pore ſo much upon the *tranſcendent excellencies* which are in their Brethren, that they are ſtark blind in their own concernments, and cannot ſee any grace in themſelves, and hereupon are apt to conclude, that they are out of Gods favour. But this is a *non ſequitur*. The Foot muſt not ſay, that it is no part of the body, becauſe it is not ſo eminent a part as the head or heart. We muſt rather ſay with the Martyr, *Bleſſed be God that I am a member in Chriſts body, though but the weakeſt and loweſt*. We muſt not reſt ſatisfied with being *low Chriſtians*; but yet we muſt not therefore ſay, *We are no Chriſtians*. And when we are under great tribulations and temptations, if we cannot apply to our ſelves for our comfort thoſe Promiſes which are made to eminent Saints of the higheſt form, let us apply thoſe which are made unto true Saints, though to ſuch who are the loweſt of the loweſt

Form;

Form; and hereby we ſhall (through Gods bleſſing) find our ſouls marvelouſly *ſupported* and *comforted*. As for example, Chriſt hath ſaid, *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit, for theirs is the Kingdome of Heaven*. Mat. 5. 3. And therefore though thou art not *rich in grace*, yet if *poor in ſpirit*, thou art bleſſed: Chriſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted*. Mat. 5. 4. Though thou canſt not live without ſin, yet if a mourner for thine own, and other mens ſins, thou art bleſſed.

Chriſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are they which do hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſſe, &c.* Mat. 5. 6. Though thou findeſt an exceeding great want of righteouſneſs in thee, yet if thou hungreſt and thirſteth after it, thou art bleſſed.

Chriſt ſaith, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*. Mat. 11. 28. This Text is an Alabaſter box full of precious conſolation. If thy ſins be a burden to thee, Chriſt will give thee reſt; if thou carrieſt them about thee, not as a Golden Chain about thy neck, but as an Iron Chain about thy feet; if thou beeſt heavy laden with them,

Christ will take them off thy shoulders, and put them upon his.

Mat.12.20. Christ saith, *That he will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoaking flax, till he send forth judgement unto victory.* If thou hast grace but as a *smoaking flax*, Christ will not quench it, but assist it, till it come to a great flame.

Mat. 9 12, 13. Christ saith, *That the whole have no need of the Physitian, but they that are sick. And that he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.* If thou art a sin-sick-sinner, thy name is in Christs Commission, he came to save thee.

Mat.18.11. Christ saith, *The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.* If thou apprehendest thy self to be in a lost condition, thou art amongst the number of those whom Christ came to save.

Rom.8. 1. The Apostle saith, *There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* Though thou hast much flesh in thee, and art sometimes overtaken with sin, yet if thou dost not walk after the flesh, as a servant after his Master, if thou walkest after the Spirit, there is no condemnation to thee.

The

The Apoſtle ſaith, *If we confeſs our ſins, God is faithful to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.* If we confeſſe our ſins, out of a deteſtation of ſin, with bleeding hearts, and a ſincere purpoſe of forſaking them, God is bound by vertue of his Promiſe to forgive us, elſe he were unfaithfull. 1 Ioh. 1. 9.

The Apoſtle ſaith, *That he that hath begun a good work in us, will perform it until the day of Jeſus Chriſt:* And therefore if thou haſt truth of grace, though but as a grain of Muſtard ſeed, do not doubt, but that God in the diligent uſe of means, will inable thee to perſevere. Phil. 1. 6.

I might adde, *Nehemiah* 1. 11. where God promiſeth to be *attentive to the prayers of thoſe who deſire to fear his Name.* And *Iſaiah* 26. 11. *Iſa.* 26. 3. *Iſaiah* 65. 1. *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 22. 15. *John* 6. 37. But I forbear.

Rule 6.

The ſixth Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

If thou canſt not apply to thy ſelf for thy comfort in affliction, the *conditional Promiſes*, lay hold upon the *abſolute Promiſes*. I have formerly told you that there

there are some Promises *conditional*, others *absolute*, some to *grace*, others of *grace*, some to those that are *godly*, others to *make us godly*: God hath not only promised to *pardon* those that repent, but to give repentance; not onely to justifie those who beleeve, but to give us to beleeve; not only to give Heaven to those that love him, but to give us grace to love him; not only to save those that persevere, but to inable us to persevere: And therefore if thou canst not lay hold upon the Promises to those that *are godly*, apply those which are made to make us *godly*. If not those which are made to those who *repent, beleeve and persevere*, apply those wherein God promiseth *to give us to repent, beleeve, and persevere*. If not the conditionall, lay hold upon the absolute.

Acts 5. 31. Phil. 1. 29. Deut. 30. 6. Jer. 32. 40.

There are these *differences* and *agreements*, between conditional and absolute promises.

1 For Conditional promises.

1 All promises of *life and salvation are conditional*.

2 *Conditional promises*, are the *fruit of Free-grace*, as well as *absolute*. It is Free-grace

grace which inableth us to perform the *conditional*, and Free-grace which moved God to promiſe ſuch great mercies upon ſuch conditions.

3 They are the fruit of *Rich-grace*, and *Rare-mercy*, as well as abſolute promiſes.

4 They are of great uſe to *quicken a lazie Chriſtian*, and to *incourage him to diligence*; for no man can obtain the *bleſſing promiſed*, but he that performs the *condition injoyned*.

5 They are *rare Touchſtones* to try our intereſt in the Promiſes; For he that neglects to perform the *condition*, cannot challenge an intereſt in the *bleſſing promiſed* upon the performing of it.

2 For Abſolute Promiſes.

1 Though promiſes to *grace* be conditional, yet promiſes of *grace* are abſolute, and are made by God unto Chriſt in the behalf of his elect children, according to that of *David*, *Ask of me, and I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.*

2 There are no Promiſes ſo Abſolute, as to exclude all Endeavours on our

part.

part. God will do the things promiſed *for us*, but *by us*. We work, but it is *God who worketh all our works in us, and for us.*

3 Abſolute Promiſes are *foundations of induſtry*, as well as conditional. The truth of this I made out in the former Sermon.

4 Abſolute Promiſes are *demonſtrative arguments of ſpecial election*, and of the *perſeverance* of the Saints. There are ſome peculiar ones to whom God hath promiſed (in the uſe of means) abſolutely to *write his Law in their hearts, to cauſe them to walk in his wayes*, to give them *infallibly*, and *infruſtrably* repentance, faith, and perſeverance. The promiſe of the firſt grace, and of the crowning grace is abſolute. And therefore the Doctrine of *Special Election*, and of *Perſeverance* muſt needs be true.

5 Abſolute Promiſes are *mighty helps to wounded conſciences*, and *rare Cordials for fainting and deſpairing Chriſtians*. When thou art in the dark, and ſeeſt no light, flye from the *conditional Promiſes*, to the *abſolute*, ſay, Lord, thou haſt not only promiſed to give pardon to thoſe who *repent*, but thou haſt exalted Chriſt for to

give

give *repentance*. Thou haſt not only promiſed to juſtifie thoſe who *beleeve*, but to give grace to *beleeve*. Lord fulfill thine own promiſe unto thy ſervant, &c.

Object. *All my fear is that theſe abſolute Promiſes, do not belong to me.*

Anſw. Take heed of making *deſperate concluſions againſt thy ſelfe*. Say as the King of *Nineveh*, *Who knoweth but God may turn, and have mercy?* Exclude not thy ſelf; Neither man, nor Angel can ſay, *thou art excluded*. No man ought to beleeve himſelf to be a Reprobate (as I have ſhewed) theſe promiſes belong to all that can lay hold on them as they are tendred. As the Brazen Serpent belonged to all thoſe who were able to look upon it; ſo do theſe Promiſes to all that can by faith look up that they may be healed. Say as the four Leapers in another caſe, If I go on in unbelief, I am certainly damned. And therefore I will venture upon Chriſt; I will flye to this Ark, and if I periſh, I will periſh beleeving. 2 Kings 7.

If theſe Directions will not ſuffice to comfort

comfort thee in the day of adverſity, let me adde,

Rule 7.

The ſeventh Rule for the right application of the Promiſes.

All *Promiſes* made in *Scripture* to the *Saints* in *general*, are applicable to *every Saint in particular*. God promiſeth to *Solomon*, 1 Kings 8. 37. 40. And *Jehoſhaphat* applied this to his own particular condition, 2 *Chron.* 20. 9. God promiſeth to the *Saints in general*, that he will *give them grace and glory*, that he will *with-hold no good thing from them*, that they ſhall *want nothing that is good*, and that *all outward bleſſings ſhall be added to them*. Now there is no Saint, but he may as juſtly lay hold upon thoſe promiſes, as if his name were named in them. And the reaſon is, becauſe all the Promiſes do meet in Chriſt, as all lines in a Center. And every Saint hath all Chriſt. And therefore Promiſes made to thoſe that are in Chriſt, belong to all that are in Chriſt.

Pſal. 48. 10.
Pſal. 43. 10.
Mat. 6. 33.

Rule 8.

The eight Rule for the right

All Promiſes made to *particular Saints*

are

are *applicable* to all *Saints* in the *ſame condition.* God promiſeth to *Joſhua*, that he *would never leave him, nor forſake him.* This is applied by the Apoſtle for the comfort of every Saint. Chriſt tells *Peter*, Luke 22. 32. *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.* This is applicable to every Saint: Chriſt prayeth for thee and me, and therefore he adds, *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren.* Therefore the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, *That God comforted him in his tribulation, that he might be able to comfort thoſe who are in trouble by the comfort wherewith he was comforted.* And the Apoſtle *James* propounds the example of the *Prophets* in general, and of *Job* in particular, to perſwade unto patience in affliction. And therefore when thou art in any ſtrait, conſider what God hath promiſed unto others, in thy condition, and what God hath done to them, he will do to thee, for he is unchangeable. And ſay not, If I were a *Paul*, a *Peter*, or a *Job*, God would do to me, as he did to them; but I am a poor, weak unworthy creature, not worthy to be named that day in which theſe are named. But conſider, If thou beeſt a member of Chriſts body

Application of the Promiſes. Joſh. 5. Heb. 13. 5.

2 Cor. 1. 4.

James 5. 10, 11.

body (though but as the Toe) Christ will have a care of thee. If a child of God (though but weak and sickly) thy heavenly Father will provide for thee. A Father is tender of every child, and a man of every member of his body; so will God be of all those who belong to him, though but Babes in Christ.

Rule 9.

The ninth Rule for the right application of the Promises. Iam. 2. 10.

The Promises of the Gospel are all *concatenated*. If thou hast a true *right* to any one Promise to which Heaven is annexed, thou hast a right to all the other. As the *Commandements of God are chained together* (he that breaks one, breaks all, and he that sincerely labours to keep one, will labour to keep all, according to that Rule. *Whatsoever is done for God, is done equally.*) And as the Graces of God are linked together; (and therefore heaven is sometimes promised to our grace, because he that hath one saving grace, hath all) so also are the Promises joyned together, he that hath a right to one, hath a right to all: For they are all but *one, and the same for substance*. They are all the

Quicquid propter Deum fit, æqualiter fit. Mat. 5. 3. 8.

fruit

fruit of the ſame free love in God; They are all *the branches of the ſame Covenant of grace*: (And therefore if thou haſt a right to the Covenant, thou haſt a right to all the Promiſes) they all carry us to Chriſt, and meet in Chriſt, and are in him *Yea*, and in him *Amen*; And therefore if thou haſt a right to Chriſt, thou haſt a right to all.

This is a point of *ſingular comfort in the worſt of dayes and dangers*. For ſometimes a child of God under great afflictions, can lay hold upon one Promiſe, and not upon another, and ſome can apply thoſe which others cannot, and others thoſe which they cannot. Let all ſuch know for their great comfort, That he that hath right to one *branch of the Covenant*, *hath right to all*; He that hath let fall a Chain of Gold, conſiſting of divers links into the water, if he can catch hold upon any one of the links, he will eaſily get out the *whole chain*. The Promiſes are like to a Golden Chain with divers links, lay hold upon one aright, and this will aſſure thee of thy intereſt in all the reſt.

I have known many (yea, very many) who have dyed with a great deal of com-

comfort from the application of that one Text, 1 *John* 3. 14. unto their own condition. *We know that we have passed from death, unto life, because we love the Brethren.* When all other evidences failed them, and all other Texts of Scripture afforded them no comfort; here they anchored, here they found rest for their souls. They blessed God that they could say, that they *loved the Brethren*, and loved them, *not for any outward respects*, but because of the *Image of God in them*, and they loved them when poor, as well as when rich; and the more they had of God, the more they loved them; and they loved them even when they were reproved by them of their faults. And upon this one Plank they swam safely, and comfortably unto the *Haven of eternal happinesse.*

Rule 10.

The tenth Rule for the right Application of the Promises.

If thy *condition* be so sad, and thy *melancholy* so *excessive*, that thou canst not lay hold upon any promise, yet notwithstanding look towards it. Say as *Jonah*, when he was in the Whales belly, *Jonah* 2. 4.

2. 4. *Then I ſaid, I am caſt out of thy ſight, yet I will look again toward thy holy Temple.* The Temple was a type of Chriſt. Though thou canſt not apply Chriſt to thy ſoul for thy comfort, yet look towards him; and if thou canſt not come to him, he will come to thee: if thou canſt not apprehend him, he will apprehend thee: As the *Load-ſtone* will draw the *Iron*, though the *Iron* cannot draw the *Load-ſtone*, ſo will Chriſt (thy heavenly *Load-ſtone*) draw thee to the *Promiſe*, though thou canſt not draw thy ſelf to it. *No man can come to me* (ſaith Chriſt) *except the Father draw him:* Pray therefore with the Church, Cant. 1. 4. *Draw me, and we will run after thee.* Pſal. 3. 12. Joh. 6. 44.

Rule 11.

Pray unto God to give thee *Spiritual eyes*, to behold thy *intereſt* in the *Promiſes:* For as it is God who makes them, ſo it is he only who can *irradiate* them, and open thy eyes to ſee thy right in them. It is with Promiſes (as I have ſaid) as with Chapters and Sermons. A man may read a Chapter, and hear a The eleventh Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

Sermon, and taſte no ſweetneſs in them at one time, and at another time taſte much ſweetneſs in them, as God is pleaſed to co-operate with the reading of the one, and hearing of the other. So it is with the Promiſes, and therefore pray unto God *to lighten thine eyes, that thou ſleep*
Pſal. 13. 3. *not the ſleep of death.* Pray unto Chriſt *to*
Rev. 3. 18. *anoint thine eyes with his Spiritual eye-ſalve.* And to cauſe thee to hope in his word of Promiſe, according to that excellent prayer of *David, Remember the Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou haſt cauſed me*
Pſal. 19. *to hope.* It is God muſt cauſe us to hope and truſt in his Promiſes, or elſe we ſhall never be able. God hath given thee eyes to ſee thy miſery; O pray for eyes to ſee his mercy. The Church of *Laodicea*
Rev. 3. 17. wanted eyes to ſee her miſery. *She was miſerable, and naked, and knew it not.* Thou haſt eyes to ſee thy undone condition out of Chriſt. Pray for eyes to behold the riches of mercy that are in Chriſt, and his willingneſs to receive all that come to him.

Rule

Rule 12.

Pray unto God, not only to give thee *Spiritual eyes* to ſee thy intereſt in the Promiſes, but a *Spiritual hand*, to inable thee to apply them to thine own ſoul in particular. By this Spiritual Hand, I mean, *A Chriſt-appropriating Faith.* Juſtifying Faith is (as it were) the *hand of the ſoul*, by which we *appropriate Chriſt*, and all the Promiſes, as belonging to us in particular. Now *Faith is the gift of God.* Pray for *the Spirit of Faith.* And for your incouragement, conſider, that the Spirit is called, *The Promiſe of the Father, and that holy Spirit of Promiſe*: And God hath promiſed to give the Spirit to thoſe who ask for it, *If ye then being evill, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more ſhall your Heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* The office of the Holy Spirit is firſt to *ſeal grace*, and then to *ſeal to grace*: Firſt, the Spirit *ſanctifieth* us, then it *witneſſeth* to our *ſpirits*, that we are *ſanctified.* Pray therefore unto God that he would not only work grace in you, but *witneſs unto the grace*

The tweifth Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

Eph. 2. 8.

Acts 1. 4. Eph. 1. 13.

Luke 11. 13.

Eph. 1. 13.

which he hath wrought. Pray for the *ſanctifying* and *ſealing* work of the Spirit. That he would not only fit you to have an *intereſt* in the Promiſes, but aſſure you of your *intereſt them.*

Rule 13.

The 13. Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

Study thy intereſt in the promiſes in the time of *health*, and *outward proſperity*; For I find by experience that a childe of God (*under outward affliction*, or *divine deſertion*, or *extream melancholy*) is many times like a man in the dark. A man in the dark cannot (though never ſo learned) read in a book of the cleareſt print, or faireſt characters, he cannot (though never ſo active) undertake any thing of weight. No more can a child of God in the *hour of diſtreſs*, read his Evidences for Heaven, much leſs ſtudy to find out Evidences; he looks upon all the Promiſes *with a black pair of ſpectacles*, and wants light to ſee his intereſt in them. When *Sion* was in diſtreſs, ſhe ſaid, *God had forſaken her, and her Lord had forgotten her.* When *David* was perſecuted by *Saul*, he ſaid in his haſte, *All men were lyars*, even

Iſa. 49. 14. Pſal. 116. 11.

Samuel

Samuel himſelf, who had told him that God would beſtow the Kingdome on him, He ſaid *in his haſt he was cut off from before Gods eyes*; Thus did *Heman*. Chriſt himſelf cryed out, when he was upon the Croſs, with a loud voice, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* As men in Agues and Feavers, are not fit judges of meats and drinks, (whether they be good or bad) becauſe their pallats are out of taſte. So a *diſtreſſed Chriſtian*, (when under *extream melancholy, divine deſertion*, or ſome *great affliction*) is no fit judge, at ſuch a time of his intereſt in the Promiſes. And therefore my advice is, *Make out thy intereſt in time of proſperity, and live upon it in time of adverſity. Make, and read over thy Evidences for Heaven in time of health, & learn them by-heart, that when thou comeſt into a dark condition, thou mayeſt neither* have them to make, or to read. Do as *Tamar* did, *Gen.* 38. 18. 25. When *Judah* her Father in law, lay with her, ſhe took as a pledge, his *ſignet, bracelets*, and *ſtaffe*. And afterward when ſhe was in great diſtreſs, and ready to be burnt as a Harlot, ſhe then brought her *ſtaffe*, and *ſignet*, and *bracelets*, and ſaid, *By the man*

Pſal. 31. 22. Pſa. 88. 13, 14, 15, 16 17, 18.

whose these are, and with child, and thereby she saved her life. So must you do. In time of health study thy interest in the Promises, and in time of sickness, live upon what thou hast studied, then bring forth thy *staffe* and *bracelets*, &c. then produce thy Evidences, and make use of them as Spiritual Bitterestes to keep thee from falling into despair. I knew a very Godly woman (not unknown to many here) who in her life time had taken a great deal of pains to compose, and write down her *Evidences* for Heaven, and who also kept a *Diary* of her life, and wrote down how she spent every day; when she lay upon her death-bed, it pleased God to with-draw himself from her for a while, and to let the Devil loose, who tempted her to despair, told her she was an *Hypocrite*, a *Formalist*, and that she had no true grace in her. She sent for me, made her bitter complaint to me, and sadly bewayled her condition. Then she told me (which before I knew not) how she had spent her life, how careful she had been in *searching her wayes*, in observing how she spent every day, and how exact in collecting *Evidences for Heaven*,

Mrs. *Diggons* dwelling with Mrs. *Mor* in Aldermanbury.

the

the book was ſent for, I read a great part of it to her, and took much delight and content in what I read. And it pleaſed God to come to her with comfort in the reading of it. She ſhewed her *Staffe*, and her *Bracelets*, and therby quenched the fiery darts of the Devil.

Thus I have in three Sermons taught you how to make uſe of *Scripture-promiſes*, as *Conduits* of *ſoul-ſupportation*, and *ſoul-conſolation* in the day of diſtreſs. When you hereafter read the *Bible*, remember the Promiſing-word (as well as the commanding and threatning word) make a *Catalogue* of the Promiſes, meditate upon the *preciouſneſſe*, *freeneſſe*, *uſefulneſſe*, *latitude*, *richneſs*, and *immutability* of them. They are as certain as God himſelf, they have the ſtrength of God, the comforts of God, and aſſiſtance of God in them. Above all, labour to make application of them to your own ſoul. For this purpoſe, ſtudy theſe thirteen Rules and Directions. Pray unto God to give thee *ſpiritual eyes*, to ſee thy intereſt in them, and *ſpirituall hands* to reach out after them. Pray to God to give thee *ſpiritual ability*, to act faith upon the Promiſes, to

draw vertue from them, as the Woman who had the bloody iſſue, did from Chriſt; to ſuck out all the ſweetneſs that is in them, to hang upon them, as the Woman did upon the Prophet, and as a Bee doth upon a Flower, and by application of them to thy ſoul, to live in God, and on God here, till thou comeſt to enjoy the bleſſings promiſed with God for ever in Heaven.

There is one Objection behind, which when I have anſwered, I have done. For a diſtreſſed Chriſtian will object, and ſay,

Object. *Though the Promiſes are* rare Cordials, *and ſhall all of them be certainly fulfilled, yet God is oftentimes long before he fulfills them, and while God is fulfilling of his Promiſes, I may in the mean time periſh in my affliction.*

Gen. 3. 15. Lu. 18. 7, 8.

Anſw. It cannot be denied, but that God is oftentimes very long in fulfilling his Promiſes. He promiſed that the *ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe the Serpents head*; but it was four thouſand years before that promiſe was actually accompliſhed.

pliſhed. He promiſeth to *avenge his elect of all their enemies, to do it ſpeedily.* And the ſouls under the Altar cry, *How long Lord, when wilt thou avenge our blood? &c.* But this is not yet fulfilled. Rev. 6. 10.

Nay, I muſt adde, That God is not only a long time *performing* his Promiſes, but ſometimes inſtead of performing them, he ſeems to the eye of fleſh and blood to walk contrary to them. *Sometimes the Providences of God run croſſe to his Promiſes.* God promiſed to make *David* King; inſtead of this, he is perſecuted by *Saul*, as a *Partridge upon the mountains*, he is driven to that extremity that he begins to doubt of Gods promiſe, and to ſay, *That one day he ſhall dye by the hand of Saul.* God promiſed to *Joſeph*, *That the Sun, Moon, and Stars ſhould worſhip him*, and that his *ſheaf ſhould be lifted up above the ſheaf of his brethren.* But he finds the quite contrary, his brethren ſeek to *ſlay him*, ſell him into *Ægypt*, and there he is put in priſon as one quite forſaken of God. But yet notwithſtanding all this, you muſt know, That though the way of God, in performing his promiſes, be very myſterious and ſecret, yet he will at laſt perform 1 Sam. 27. 1.

form every *iota*, and tittle of them. Thus *David* was at last made King of *Israel*, and *Joseph* Lord of *Ægypt*, and his brethren came all to worship him.

Quest. *How must we carry and behave our selves at such times, when* Providences *seem to run cross unto Gods Promises?*

Ans. At such times there are three things required of us.

Three duties to be practised when providences run cross to promises. Ha. 28. 16.

1 It is our duty to wait *patiently*, and *beleevingly*, till *Providences* and *Promises* meet together. *He that beleeveth, maketh not haste.* The Prophet there speaks of a glorious promise, and adds, That a true Saint will wait Gods time, which is the fittest and best time, he will patiently expect, till God fulfill his promise. He will do as the Martyr did, who might have escaped privately out of prison, and was tempted to it by his friends; But answered: *He would not go out of Prison when his enemies would have him, for they would make him tarry longer than he should, nor yet when his friends would have him, for they would make him tarry a lesser time than he should; but he would come out when God would have him.*

Gods

Gods time is the beſt; and they are ſoon enough delivered, who are delivered in Gods way, and at Gods time. This then is thy great duty (O Chriſtian) to wait patiently, and beleevingly, and not to ſeek by unlawfull wayes to be rid of thy miſeries, as *David* did by going to the *Philiſtims*; and as many in *Queen Maries* did, by yeelding to the Popiſh ſuperſtitions. To help you to wait Gods leiſure, holding Faith and a good conſcience; you have 1 Sam. 27. 1.

1 Many rare and precious Promiſes made to thoſe that wait upon him, which I have formerly named.

2 You have four attributes in God to ſupport you, his *faithfulneſſe, allmightineſſe, infinite goodneſſe, and wiſdom.* He is faithful, and not one title of his Word ſhall fall to the ground; He is *Allmighty*, and able to do whatſoever he hath promiſed; He is *Infinitely wiſe*, to know the beſt time and ſeaſon, and infinitely good and loving to his children, and doth not willingly afflict them, but will make haſte to help them. Lam. 3. 35.

2 It is our duty to live upon *Promiſes*, while *Providences* ſeem to run croſs to

Promiſes.

Promiſes. This is the meaning of *Hab.* 2. 4. *The juſt ſhall live by Faith.* They ſhall *live by faith*, when they have nothing elſe to live on. When ſenſe and reaſon tell them, they are undone, then ſhall they *live by Faith* in the Promiſes, and not only live patiently, but comfortably, and joyfully, as the ſame Prophet ſaith, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18, 19. *Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſome, neither ſhall fruit be in the Vine, and the field ſhall yeeld no meat, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* This life did *Paul* live, when the ſhip in which he was, was ready to be drowned, when there was neither Sun-light, nor Star-light, yet he was exceedingly chearful, becauſe God had promiſed to preſerve him, and thoſe with him. By living this life, *God is much honoured*, and our ſouls much quieted and refreſhed.

Acts 27. 23, 24.

3. It is our duty to *continue praying, till Providences and Promiſes meet together*: For it is prayer, and prayer only, which will at laſt reconcile Gods Promiſes, and Gods Diſpenſations, and cauſe them to meet, and to kiſs one another: For as the Promiſes are the ground and rule of our Pray-

Prayers; ſo our Prayers are the divine wayes and means for the obtaining of the Promiſes. I ſay, as the Promiſes are

1 The ground of our prayers. For we cannot pray in Faith, unleſs we have ſome promiſe to bottome our prayers upon; therefore *David* often chargeth God in his prayers with his Promiſe. He harps eight times upon the ſame ſtring in one Pſalm, to teach us, that the greateſt *Rhetorick and Oratory we can uſe in our prayers, is to urge God with his Promiſe.* Pſal. 119. 28, 38, 41, 65. 76. 107. 142. 149.

2 They are not only the ground, but the rule of our prayers; As we muſt pray for nothing but what God hath promiſed, ſo we muſt regulate our prayers according to Gods Promiſes. Thoſe things which he hath abſolutely promiſed, we muſt pray for abſolutely, and where God hath put conditions, and exceptions, there our prayers muſt be conditional.

Now as the Promiſes are the ground and rule of our prayers, ſo our prayers are divine means and helps for the obtaining of the promiſes: Though God hath made many glorious and precious promiſes to his children, yet he will perform

none

none of them, but to those who by prayer seek them at his hands. When *Nathan* told *David* what great things God had promised to him, he went into Gods house to pray for them, 2 Sam. 7. The Prophet *Isaiah* mentioneth a glorious promise, *Isa.* 43. 25. but he adds, *Put me in remembrance*, vers. 20. Thus *Ezekiel* 36. 37. *I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel*; and therefore when you read the Promises of the Bible, remember whatsoever God makes a promise, you must make a prayer, and that prayer will hasten the fulfilling of the Promises: You must continue to pray, and faint not; For the *vision is but for an appointed time, though it tarry,* Hab. 2. 2. *wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* This did *Daniel* when he understood the time approached, &c. he prayed, *Dan.* 9. 2, 3. Thus did *David*, *Ps.* 56. 9, 10. 57. 1, 2. Thus must you do. These are the three great duties which the Lord requires of us at all times, but more especially in these our dayes, wherein the *Providences* of God seem to run quite cross unto his *Promises*. The Lord give us grace to practise them. So much for this Text.

The End of the Fifth Sermon.

A

A Brief Repetition of what was said of Mrs. *Elizabeth Moore* at her Burial.

THough I have finiſhed my Text, yet I have another Text remaining, of which I muſt ſpeak a few words; and that is, The Party deceaſed, at whoſe Funeral we are here met.

She was a Woman (I verily believe) truly *fearing God*, and yet throughout her whole life loaded with many and great troubles. God picked her out to be a *pattern* of afflictions, as he had not long before that Reverend and Godly Miniſter, Mr. *Jeremiah Whitakers*.

This *Pattern* teacheth us three Leſſons.

1 *That all things come alike to all in this world, and that no man knoweth love or hatred by any thing that is before him.* The beſt of

of Saints ſometimes are upon the Dung-hil, when the vileſt of men are upon the Throne. The beſt of men are afflicted, when the worſt of men are in proſperity.

2 That there is not ſo much *evil in affliction*, or ſo much *good* in *proſperity*, as the *world imagineth*. For if there were, God would not beſtow ſo much proſperity upon the wicked, and exerciſe his dear children with ſo many afflictions.

3 That there will come a rewarding day, in which it ſhall certainly be well with the *Righteous*. When I ſee a wicked man proſper, I ſay, Surely there will come a *puniſhing day*, in which the wicked ſhall be turned into Hell. When I ſee a Godly man in adverſity, I ſay, *Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth*. Such examples prove that there is another life beſides this. And that if the *Godly had hope only in this life, they were of all people moſt miſerable*.

Pſal. 58.

I will not trouble you with a relation of her Chriſtian carriage in the time of her health, becauſe it is ſufficiently known to moſt here preſent. I ſhall only take

take notice of her great care and diligence in making her *calling and election ſure*. She had not her Ark to build when the flood came, nor her Corn to get when the ſeven years of famine came: She had laid up a ſtock of graces, and comforts againſt the evil hour; She had not her *Evidences for Heaven* to get, at the hour of death. But ſhe had collected and compoſed them in the time of her life, and when ſhe came to dye, ſhe had neither her graces, nor her comforts, nor her *Evidences for Heaven* to ſeek, ſhe had nothing to do but to dye.

Her ſickneſs was very long, and very painful, concerning which I ſhall briefly acquaint you with theſe few particulars.

1 God moved the hearts of very many godly people, to take compaſſion of her ſad and afflicted condition, and to contribute liberally (ſhe being poor) towards her relief, this merciful providence wonderfully comforted her; ſhe ſaw Gods love in it, and was ſo much affected with it, that ſhe was (for a little while) really and exceedingly afraid (notwithſtanding her great torments by rea-

ſon of a Cancer in her breaſt) leſt ſhe ſhould have her Heaven in this life, and leſt this mercy ſhould be all her portion. The Lord recompence that labour of love, and that Chriſtian charity a thouſand fold into the boſomes of thoſe who manifeſted ſo much kindneſs to her.

2 Her Patience was very great. As God increaſed her pains, he increaſed her patience, even to the admiration of ſuch of us as were frequent ſpectators of it. She was brought to ſuch a ſweet frame of ſpirit, as to be *willing to live under all her torments, as long as God pleaſed, and to dye whenſoever he pleaſed.*

3 She was a woman of a very fearful nature, and in the time of her health had many doubts and ſcruples (notwithſtanding all her care forementioned) about her ſalvation. But in her ſickneſs, all her doubts vaniſhed. God chained up Satan. The Devil had no power to tempt her, ſhe felt a great calmneſs in her ſoul, and had much inward peace, and injoyed more of God, and his conſolations, in the time of her ſickneſs, than in the time of her health.

4 She

4 She was very forward in ſpreading & diffuſing thoſe graces which God had beſtowed upon her, and in giving good counſel to thoſe who viſited her. I have heard her often, and often perſwading her friends to prize health, and to improve it for the good of their ſouls, to lay up againſt an evill day, and to ſtock themſelves with grace before ſickneſs come. She would frequently ſay, *O the benefit of health! O prize health! praiſe God for health, and improve health for your eternal good.*

5 She was very well verſ't in the Scriptures. The Law of God was her *delight, and this kept her from periſhing in her affliction.* She was continually fetching Cordials out of the Word, to comfort her under her great pains, and to preſerve her from fainting. The 12. of the *Hebrews* was a precious Cordial to her, ſo was the 8 of the *Romans*, and the 2 of the *Corinthians*, the 4. *Chapter*, and the 17. 18. *verſes*. *For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

While we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen, for

the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal.

1 Cor. 15, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57.

For this corruptible muſt put on incorruption, and this mortal, muſt put on immortality.

So when this corruptible ſhall have put on incorruption, and this mortal ſhall have put on immortality; then ſhall be brought to paſſe the ſaying that is written, Death is ſwallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?

The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the Law.

But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Phil. 3.21. *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things unto himſelf.*

A little before her death ſhe ſaid, *In the Lord Jehovah there is righteouſneſſe and ſtrength*; righteouſneſs for *juſtification* and ſtrength for *ſupportation*. She ſaid, that the *Word of God was the beſt Cordial in the world*: And that one minutes being in Heaven, would make amends for *all her pain and miſery*.

6 And laſtly, I cannot but take ſpecial notice of the happy cloſe of her life, and of the bleſſed end ſhe made. It is ſaid of *Job*, James 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have ſeen the end of the Lord, &c.* This our Chriſtian Sifter did in a great meaſure, partake both of *Jobs pains*, and *Jobs patience*, and made as happy an end, as he did, though in another kind. In the morning of that day in which ſhe dyed, ſhe fell into a ſlumber, in which ſhe heard (as ſhe thought) one ſaying to her, *This day thou ſhalt be with me in Paradice.* Immediately ſhe awaked full of joy, and though hardly able to ſpeak, yet ſhe uttered it to thoſe who ſtood by, and was much comforted with it. Now though I am far from putting any confidence in *dreams*, and doubt not *that a man may dream he ſhall go to Heaven; and yet be caſt into Hell.* Though I do not think *that comfortable dreams are ſufficient evidences of ſalvation.* (Nay, when they are brought as proofs of *erroneous opinions*, I account them *Diabolicall deluſions*; and when wicked men have them; *pleaſant preſumptions.*) Yet notwithſtanding when a woman who hath ſpent many years in the ſervice of God,

and is visited by God for above a year, with great and most grievous pains, shall at the close of her life, (when she is upon the very brink of eternity) have such a *sweet, refreshing, and heart-chearing impression upon her spirit*; when heart fails, and flesh fails: When she can hardly speak to express the greatness of her joy, then to hear a voice (as it were) saying to her, *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.* This (in all probability) was *the voyce of God, and not of man. This was the Lords doing, and it is marveilous in our eyes.* I forbear saying any more. She is gone from a Prison to a Palace; from a Purgatory to a Paradise. She is at *rest with God, where all tears are wiped away from her eyes:* The Lord fit us by his Grace to follow her in due time into the Kingdom of Glory. *AMEN.*

Mrs.

Mrs. *Elizabeth Moores*

EVIDENCES FOR HEAVEN;

Collected by her self in the time of her health, in such manner and method, as they are here presented to Publick view.

1 Her *Design* in this *Collection.*

IN the Examination of my self, I find that my Aims and Ends, why I desire to gather together, and clear up my *Evidences* for Heaven (if my deceitful heart doth not deceive me) are these following.

The first Design.

1 THat hereby (as a means) I may be inabled to glorifie God in *the great work of beleeving*, that hereby (with Gods blessing) the dim eye of my Faith may more clearly see the Lord Jesus Christ to be a *Peace-maker*, and *Reconciler*, and *Surety*, for *me*, even for *me*, who am by nature a fire-brand of Hell. The time was, I am sure, when I was the *Devils* Picture, and had the *black brand of Reprobation* upon me, and therefore it doth neerly concern me to search and trye what *Evidences* I have to prove that God fetching Arguments out of his own bowels, and the riches of his free grace, hath redeemed me out of this lost estate.

The second Design.

2 MY *Aime* is to strengthen that longed for grace of *Assurance*, A grace, which though it be not of absolute necessity for the *being* and *salvation*, yet it is of absolute necessity for the *well being* and *consolation* of a Christian; without this grace I can neither live nor dye comfortably, and I have been often exhorted by Gods faithful *Ambassadors*, to gather together my Scripture *Evidences*, and to have the approbation of some godly and experienced Minister or Christian; and this

this by Gods bleſſing may be a means to ſtrengthen Aſſurance: Yea, I find in Scripture, that the Lord ſaith, that *the Prieſts lips ſhall preſerve knowledge, and thou ſhalt ſeek the Law at his mouth, for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts.* Mal. 3. 7.

3 MY *Aime* is to obey God in his Word, who hath commanded me by his Apoſtle, *to work out my own ſalvation with fear and trembling; and to give all diligence to make my calling and election ſure:* And I am exhorted *to examine my ſelfe, and prove my ſelf, whether I be in the faith or no, Know ye not* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that Chriſt is in you, except you be Reprobates: And if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature; old things are paſſed away, and all things are become new.* The third Deſign. Phil 2. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

Now then to prove whether I be indeed and in truth born again, is my deſire at this time, the Lord help me, and give me a ſincere and upright heart, and guide me herein by his holy Spirit, for the honour of his holy Name.

2 A brief *Collection* of her *Evidences* for *Heaven.*

Bleſſed be God, who hath through his free mercy *begotten me to a hope*, that I am *regenera-* First Evidence.

regenerated and born from above, and converted unto God.

Reason, Becauſe the Lord hath gone the ſame uſual way with me, as with thoſe he pleaſeth to convert to himſelf; and this I ſhall make to appear in five or ſix particulars.

1 The Lord by his Spirit accompanying the preaching of his Word, cauſed the ſcales to fall from my eyes, and opened them, and ſet up a clear light in my underſtanding, and made me to ſee *ſin to be exceeding ſinfull*, out of meaſure ſinful, and to look on it as the loathſomeſt thing in the world, and on my ſelf as a loathſome creature in Gods ſight, and in my own ſight, by reaſon of the Leproſie of ſin, wherewith I was over-run.

2. The Lord brought me to ſee the *miſery* that I was in, by reaſon of my ſins. I thought I was utterly forſaken of God, and I thought that God would never accept of ſuch a wretch as I ſaw my ſelf to be. I could not think otherwiſe, but that hell was my portion, and that I, by reaſon of my ſins muſt go thither, expecting every day when the Lord would glorifie himſelf in my damnation. I ſaw my

ſelf

ſelf in more miſery, becauſe of my ſins, than I could then, or now expreſs to any body. I looked upon God as a *conſuming fire*, and on my ſelf as *ſtubble*, ready to be conſumed by him, *&c.*

3 The Lord brought me to a ſpiritual aſtoniſhment, that I cried out, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved*! and ſaid with *Paul*, *Lord! what wouldeſt thou have me to do?* Do but make known to thy poor creature what thy will is, and I thought I could do any thing, or ſuffer any thing for the Lord. But ſince I have had ſome more knowledge of the holy Will of God, wo is me! what a barren and unfruitful heart have I! a heart that can neither do, nor ſuffer any thing for the Lord, as I ought to do: But this I can ſay, that the aſtoniſhment I was in by the ſight of my ſins, and the miſery I was plunged into, put me on the *performance of holy duties*, eſpecially *prayer*.

4 The Lord took me off my own *bottome*, off my own righteouſneſs, and made me to ſee that that was but a *ſandy foundation*, and would not hold out. I was not taken off from the performance of holy duties; no, I thought with my ſelf that I am commanded by God to perform ho-

ly

ly duties, which is the way and means whereby we may meet with God (For he is ordinarily to be injoyed no where but in his own ordinances) but the Lord took me off from reſting and truſting in Ordinances. And as he made me to ſee that without the practiſe of them he would not accept of me; ſo alſo he made me to know that it was not for holy duties, for which I was accepted. The ſins that cleave to my beſt performances, are enough for which the Lord may juſtly condemn me, if I had no other ſins.

5 The Lord brought me to ſee a *Superlative beauty and excellency in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and my ſoul was deeply in love with him, even with whole Chriſt in all his Offices, and (if I know any thing at all of my own heart) I deſired Chriſt as much to be my *King* and *Prophet*, to teach, and guide me, and ſubdue me to himſelf, and rule over me, as to be my *High-Prieſt*, to make Attonement by offering up of himſelf for me, and waſhing me in his blood, by which I muſt be juſtified.

6 The Lord brought me to ſee a *ſoul-ſatisfaction* in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt alone; and I think I ſhould be as fully ſatisfied with

with Christ alone, as my heart can desire. If I know my heart, it panteth after Christ, and Christ alone: *None but Christ, none but Christ*. The whole world in comparison or competition with Christ, is nothing to me: but in him I see full contentment. To see and know my interest in him and to injoy communion with him, is that, which if the Lord would bestow upon me, I should with *Jacob* say, *It is enough*; and with old *Simeon*) *Now let thy servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen thy salvation.*

Now I desire to set down some other Scripture Evidences; that I find upon search and examination of my heart, by laying it to the Rule; The word of God.

My second Scripture Evidence is taken from *Mark* 2. 17. Where Christ saith, *They that are whole have no need of the Physitian, but they that are sick*, and *he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* Now through Gods mercy I can say, that I am a *sin-sick-sinner* (the Lord make me more sick) I am not righteous in mine own eyes, but a sinner, and see my self undone for ever, without the righte-

Second Evidence.

ous-

ouſneſs of Chriſt be imputed to me, and therefore I hope I am amongſt the number of thoſe whom Chriſt was commiſſionated by his Father to come to ſave.

Third Evidence. From *Matth.* 11. 28, 29. I am *weary and heavy laden*; now Chriſt hath promiſed to *give eaſe* to ſuch. And I am willing to *take his yoak upon me*, and would fain learn of him the leſſon of meekneſs and lowlineſs, and therefore am invited to *come unto him.*

Fourth Evidence. I can ſay with *David*, that my ſins are a *heavy burden* to me, they are too *heavy for me*, Pſal. 38. 4. and I can ſay that I mourn, becauſe I cannot mourn no more for my ſins; now Chriſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are they that mourn for they ſhall be comforted*, Mat. 5. 4.

Fifth Evidence. From *Matth.* 5. 3. I think (if my heart do not deceive me) I am *poor in ſpirit; now theirs is the Kingdome of Heaven*, ſaith Chriſt.

Sixth Evidence. From *Matth.* 12. 20. I am a *bruiſed reed, and ſmoaking flax*, and therefore Chriſt hath promiſed, he will not break ſuch a reed, nor quench the ſmoak of grace; if it be true grace, but he will increaſe it more and more (as he ſaith) *Untill judgement*

break

break forth into victory: And he came to ſet at *liberty* them that are *bruiſed*, Luke 4. 18. Therefore I hope I am ſuch a one as he came to *bind up*, and ſet at *liberty*; Yea, and that he was *anointed* and ſent by his Father to me, and ſuch as I am, *Iſa.* 61. 1.

From 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation*, (ſaith *Paul*) *that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners*: And ſo ſay I too; it is worthy all acceptation, that Chriſt ſhould come from the boſome of his Father, who was infinitely glorious and happy, that he ſhould come into the world to ſave *me, me a ſinner, me the chief of ſinners*; me, that if ſaved, I do verily believe, there is none in Heaven, nor any that ever ſhall come thither, that hath or will have the cauſe to *magnifie and adore free-grace*, as I ſhall have. And herein doth God commend his love towards me--*For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life*, Rom. 5. 10. Seventh Evidence.

I can ſay with *Paul*, that *I delight in the Law of God, after the inward man*, and I am grieved that I cannot keep it. I find that ſpiritual war in me, between *fleſh* and *ſpi-* Eighth Evidence.

rit,

rit, which *Paul* complaineth of; and I can ſay, that *Paul* doth confeſs over my heart in his confeſſions, *Rom.* 7. And I can go along with him there, from verſ. 9. to the end of the Chapter; and from hence I gather, that there is ſome ſpiritual life in my ſoul, and an indeavour to walk after the ſpirit, and therefore I hope and deſire to conclude with him, that there ſhall be *no condemnation to me*, but that the *Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall make me free from the Law of ſin, and death.* I find an earneſt deſire wrought in my ſoul, to be made like unto Jeſus Chriſt, and that it may be my *meat* and *drink* to do and *ſuffer* his will, as he would have me.

Rom. 8. 1, 2.

Ninth Evidence. I can ſay, that the Lord hath in ſome meaſure put his fear into my heart, that I fear to offend him out of love to him, and I love to fear him.

Tenth Evidence. I can ſay with the Church to Chriſt, *Cant.* 1. 7. *O thou whom my ſoul loveth!* (and if I know any thing at all of mine own heart) Chriſt is *altogether lovely*, and moſt deſireable to my ſoul.

I think I can truly ſay with *David*, *that I have none in Heaven but thee, and there is nothing on earth that I deſire beſides thee*, in

compariſon

compariſon of thee, in *competition* with thee. Though all that is deareſt to me in the world ſhould forſake me, yet if God whom I have choſen for my *portion* will not forſake me, I have enough. It is my deſire and endeavour more and more to *account all things but loſs and dung*, that I may win Chriſt. I can with *Peter* make my appeal to him, and ſay, Lord, thou who *knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee*, and that it is the deſire of my ſoul to love thee more, and to love thee for thy ſelf, becauſe thou art holy, and good, and gracious, and *the chiefeſt amongſt ten thouſand*; Yea God in Chriſt alone, is worthy to be beloved, and it is my *higheſt priviledge* that he will give me leave to love him, who only can ſatisfie my ſoul, and *redeem* it from death eternall, who hath juſtified me by his blood, and ſanctified me by his Spirit, whom therefore I love *with all my heart, and all my ſoul, and all my might, and all my ſtrength*. Finding therefore, that God hath drawn out my heart to love him, and make choice of him alone, I from hence gather and ground my hope that God loveth me, according to that Scripture, 1 *John* 4:

19. *We love him, because he first loved us.*

Eleventh Evidence. I find my heart much inflamed with love to all the children of God, *because they are Gods children*, and the more I see, or find, or hear of God in them, the more I find my heart cleaving to them, and I think I can truly say with *David*, That *my delight is in the Saints, and those that excel in grace*; not because they are friends to me, or I have relation to them in regard of outward obligations, but because they bear the Image of God upon them, and manifest it in their holy conversation. I love them, whether rich, or poor: And though I did never know some of them, but only hear of their holiness, and piety, yet I could not but exceedingly love such. Therefore I hope that *I am passed from death to life, because I love the Brethren*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14.

Twelfth Evidence. I do not only love God, and the children of God, but I labour to *keep his Commandements*, and they are not *grievous* to me. But I pray with *David*, *O that my wayes were directed to keep thy statutes! Lord inlarge my heart, and I will run the wayes of thy Commandements. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy Law, yea, I shall observe it with*

1 Joh. 5. 3.

Psal. 119. 5. v. 32, 34.

with my whole heart; for therein do I delight.

I find I am one that is very thirſty after Jeſus Chriſt, and the grace of Chriſt; and I thirſt to have his image more and more ſtamped upon me; and I would fain be aſſured by Gods Spirit, that I am *tranſplanted* into Chriſt, and therefore I long, and indeavour after a true and *lively Faith*, becauſe that Grace is a *ſoul-tranſplanting and uniting grace*. Now Chriſt hath promiſed to ſatisfie the *thirſty*, *Math.* 5. 6. and ſuch Chriſt hath earneſtly invited to come, though they have nothing to bring but what may make againſt themſelves, yet to come *empty*, and he hath promiſed to *fill them*, Iſa. 55. 1, 2. Thirteenth Evidence.

I am willing to *confeſſe*, and with all my heart to forſake all my ſins. I am willing to give glory to God in taking ſhame unto my ſelf. I acknowledge my ſelf a guilty Malefactor, and judge my ſelf worthy of the juſt condemnation of the righteous Judge of all the earth. And I do not only confeſs my ſins, but with all my heart I deſire to forſake them, and to turn to the Lord: Now he hath ſaid, he *will have mercy* on ſuch, and will Fourteenth Evidence.

abundantly pardon them. For his thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his wayes, as our wayes, *Isa.* 55. 7, 8. It is my conſtant indeavour to dye to ſin, to live to newneſs of life. And this is my comfort and hope, that he who hath begun a good work in me, will perfect it. For it is he that *worketh all our works in us, and for us,* Iſa. 26. 12. and he that hath wrought in me to *will* to do that which is pleaſing in his ſight, will work in me to *do* alſo, & that of his good pleaſure, *Phil.* 2. 13.

Fifteenth Evidence. I hope I am one whom God hath taken into Covenant with himſelf, becauſe he hath beſtowed upon me the fruits of the Covenant, becauſe he hath *circumciſed my heart* to love him, and hath put his *fear into me,* and hath wrought an univerſal change in me; and hath given me a *new heart,* and a *new ſpirit*; yea his own ſpirit which he hath put within me, even the *Spirit of Truth, which will guide me into all Truth.* It is his own promiſe to *give his holy Spirit to them that ask it of him* (as I have done often) *Luke* 11. 13. and I hope that God will make it in his due time, a *witneſſing,* and a *comforting ſpirit.* I will wait upon him for the accompliſh-

ment

ment of all his promiſes, both *of* grace, and *to* grace. He hath ſaid, he will be a *Sun* and a *Shield*, he will *give grace and glory, & no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.* And he hath promiſed to ſubdue our ſins for us; and hath ſaid, *That ſin ſhall not have Dominion over us*, Rom. 6. 14. *That he will be our God, and we ſhall be his children; and he will ſave us from all our uncleanneſſes.* I hope I have a ſhare in this bleſſed Covenant of Free Grace.

As for my *Affliction* that lyeth upon me (though it be in it ſelf very heavy) I much more deſire the *ſanctification* of it, than the *removal*. I earneſtly labour to learn all thoſe leſſons which God teacheth me by *Affliction*, I know I ſhould not be ſcourged, nor be in tribulation, but that I have need of it; *it is for my profit, to make me partaker of his holineſſe.* Afflictions are an evidence of *Sonſhip*, Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8. God hath promiſed that all *things ſhall work together for good to them that love and fear him.* And I have had much experience of his faithfulneſs, who hath not ſuffered me to be tempted above what he hath enabled me to bear; therefore *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.* Sixteenth Evidence.

him. He hath chaſtiſed me leſs than mine iniquities deſerve. He chaſtiſeth me here, that he may not condemn me hereafter.

Faith is the condition of ſalvation. *Beleeve in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved. And this is his Commandement, that we ſhould beleeve in his Son Jeſus Chriſt:* Now I find nothing ſo hard to me as to beleeve aright: to caſt away all my own *Righteouſneſs* as dung in point of juſtification, and to caſt away all my *unrighteouſneſs*, ſo as that be no bar to me, and to role, and caſt, and venter my immortal ſoul upon Jeſus Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs, for life and ſalvation by him alone, and to ſee my ſelf compleat in him; this is ſupernatural. Yet I muſt and will give glory to God, and ſay, *Lord I beleeve, help thou my unbelief.* And by this I prove that this precious grace of faith is wrought in me, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt is to me very precious: and I find in the Word, *that to them that beleeve he is precious:* and I am willing to take Chriſt upon his own terms, as he is tendred in the Goſpel; and am willing to give up my ſelf, ſoul and body wholly to him; and my love to God, and to the children of God, is a fruit of my

even-teenth Evidence.
Acts 16.31.
Joh. 3.23.
1 Pet. 2.7.

my Faith, as alſo my deſire to be made like unto him: *For he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure,* 1 John 3. 3. *And I truſt that I am kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation,* 1 Pet. 1. 5. *I know whom I have beleeved, and I am perſwaded that he is able and willing to keep that which I have committed unto him,* 2 Tim. 1. 12. which is my immortal ſoul.

Thus I have according to the Apoſtles exhortation endeavoured to give a *reaſon of the hope that is in me.* What have I but what I have received? The deſire of my ſoul is, that God may have all the glory. And if I be deceived, the Lord for Chriſts ſake undeceive me, and grant that if I have not true grace, I may not think I have, and ſo be in a *Fools Paradiſe.* And the Lord that is my *heart-maker,* be my *heart-ſearcher,* and my *heart-diſcoverer,* and my *heart-reformer.* AMEN.

FINIS.